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AN

EXPOSITION

OF THE

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER,

AND ADMINISTRATION OF

THE SACRAMENTS

AND OTHER

RITES AND CEREMONIES

OF THE

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

BY THE REV. ANDREW FOWLER, A.M
Rector of St. Bartholomew's Parish, South-Carolina.

The second Edition, with Additions and Improvements.

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TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

BENJAMIN MOORE, D. D.

Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New-York;

THIS EXPOSITION

OF THE

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, &c.

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE.

THE design of the following pages is to show the beauty, harmony, excellency, and usefulness of the BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, &c. and to render the whole sufficiently clear and intelligible to the meanest capacity.

That such a performance is much wanted, cannot be denied; for it is well known that the Book of Common Prayer is little understood by some, and but negligently used by others, even of our own communion; and that our opponents have, from time to time, raised a variety of objections against it, hoping thereby to lessen its credit, and to bring it into disuse.

The consideration of these great evils has induced me to publish this *Exposition*, wherein the prayers and administration of the sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of our church are illustrated, ob-

jections answered, and advice is humbly offered, both to the younger clergy and the laity, for promoting true devotion in the use of these forms.

To render this attempt successful, I have endeavoured to comprise as much information as possible in a small volume.—I have also divided the book into suitable chapters, and arranged the subjects of it in the same order in which they are placed in the Book of Common Prayer.—The form of it, by way of question and answer, was chosen, because it is a method best adapted to convey instruction, and to impress on the mind the truths which it inculcates.

The first chapter is intended as an introduction to the work.—Of the other chapters, it will be needless to add any thing more concerning them than what is contained in the table of contents.—At the end of the book is annexed an alphabetical index of the ecclesiastical writers cited in this Exposition, and the times when they flourished; as also an explanation of some words and terms therein used, in order to

assist the common reader, whose benefit is here principally regarded.

In this edition I have made some essential alterations and additions, and should have made more, if time and situation would have permitted.

It will be proper to observe, that, in the prosecution of this work I have not only consulted Bishop Sparrow, Dr. Comber, Dr. Nichols, Mr. Bennet, Mr. Nelson, Mr. Wheatly, Mr. Shepherd, and others, but have actually selected from them whatever would answer my purpose; and especially from the last two named authors.

How well I have executed this undertaking I leave my reader to judge; hoping his candour will excite him to make favourable allowances for its many imperfections; and also that it may please God to bless my honest endeavours to his glory, and the good of his church, whose prosperity ever occupies the first place in my affections.

O pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee.

Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces.

For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will wish thee prosperity.

Yea, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek to do thee good.

Psalm cxxii.

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AN

EXPOSITION, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Of Forms of Prayer.

ST. LUKE xi. 1.

Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father who art in heaven, &c.

Q. WHAT *do you mean by common prayer?*

A. The form of service used by the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, upon several occasions, ordinary and extraordinary; ratified by the Bishops, the Clergy, and the laity, in convention, the sixteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine; when they declared it to be the liturgy of this church, and ordered it to be received as such by all the members of the same.

Q. *Whence appears the lawfulness of forms of prayer?*

A. From the custom of the ancient Jews, the precept and example of our Saviour, the example also of his Apostles, and the practice of the primitive Christians.

Q. *How does it appear that the Jews joined in precomposed forms?*

A. By innumerable testimonies, both ancient and modern, as Josephus, Philo, Paul, Fagius, Scaliger, Buxtorf, and Selden, in Eutychium; and especially

Dr. Hammond and Dr. Lightfoot: the former of whom proves that the Jews used set forms, and that their prayers and praises, &c. were in the same order as our Common Prayer; and the latter not only asserts that they worshipped God by stated forms, but mentions both the order and method of their hymns and supplications. So that there is no more reason to doubt that they used a precomposed settled liturgy, than that we use the book of Common Prayer.

Q. What instances of precomposed forms of Jewish worship do we find in the scriptures?

A. A great variety: the first piece of solemn worship recorded in scripture is a hymn of praise, composed by Moses upon the deliverance of the children of Israel from the Egyptians, which was sung by all the congregation alternately; by Moses and the men first, and afterwards by Miriam and the women, Exodus xv. which could not have been done unless it had been a precomposed form. In the expiation of an uncertain murder, the elders of the city that is next to the slain are expressly commanded to offer up, and consequently to join in a form of prayer precomposed by God himself, Deut. xxi. 7, 8. And in Numbers vi. 22. &c. chap. x. 35, 36. Deut. xxvi. 3, 5, &c. are several other forms of prayer precomposed by God, and prescribed by Moses; which, though they were not to be joined in by the whole congregation, are yet sufficient precedents for the use of precomposed stated forms. The scriptures also assure us that David appointed the Levites to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even, 1 Chron. xxiii. 30. which rule was observed in the temple afterwards built by Solomon, and restored at the building of the second temple after the captivity, Nehem. xii. 25, 45, 46. And the whole book of Psalms, it may be observed, were forms of prayer and praise indited by the Holy Ghost for the joint use of the congregation; as appears from the titles

of several of the psalms and from divers places of scripture.

Q. How does it appear that Christ enjoined a form of prayer?

A. From Luke xi. 1, 2, &c. "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c. And again, Mat. vi. 9. After this manner pray ye, &c.

Q. How is it evident that Christ joined in precomposed set forms of prayer?

A. It cannot be doubted but that he was in communion with the Jewish church, and zealous and exemplary in their public devotions, and, consequently, that he took all opportunities of joining in those precomposed forms of prayer, which were daily used in the Jewish congregations, as the learned Dr. Lightfoot has largely proved. And we may be certain, that had not our Saviour very constantly attended their public worship, and joined in the devotions of their congregations, the scribes and pharisees, his bitter and implacable enemies, and great zealots for the temple service, would have reproached him as "an ungodly wretch that despised prayer," &c. But nothing of this nature do we find in the New Testament; and, therefore, had we no other evidence than this, we might safely conclude that our Saviour was a constant attendant on the public service of the Jews, and consquently that he joined in precomposed set forms of prayer.

Q. What was the practice of the Apostles and primitive Christians?

A. As to the Apostles and our Lord's other disciples, their practice was doubtless the same as that of the Jews, and our Saviour, at least till his ascension. And as to the primitive Christians, it appears that they used stated forms of prayer, from their joining in the use of the Lord's prayer, in the use

of the psalms, and divers other precomposed set forms.

Q. How do you prove that the Apostles joined in the use of the Lord's prayer?

A. That they joined in the use of the Lord's prayer is sufficiently evident from our Saviour's having commanded them so to do: for whatever dispute may be made about the original word in Mat. vi. 9. which is translated not exactly, but paraphrastically, "after this manner," but ought, with greater accuracy, to be rendered *so* or *thus*; yet if we should grant that our Lord, in this place, only proposed this prayer as a directory and the pattern to make our other prayers by, we should still find that afterwards, upon another occasion, namely, when his disciples requested him to "teach them to pray, as John had also taught his disciples," he prescribed the use of these very words, expressly bidding them, "When ye pray, say, Our Father," &c. Luke xi. 12, &c.

Q. Supposing our Saviour did prescribe this prayer as a form to his disciples, was it not for a time only, till they should be more fully instructed, and enabled to pray by the assistance of the Holy Ghost?

A. No: for if, because our Saviour has not in express words commanded this form of prayer to be used for ever, we are to conclude that it was only prescribed for a time, we must also necessarily allow, that whatever Christ has instituted without limitation of time, is not always obligatory upon us; and, consequently, we may declare Christ's institutions to be null, and regard baptism and the Lord's supper as temporary prescriptions only, as well as the Lord's prayer.

Q. Though we read in the Acts of the Apostles of several prayers made by the church, yet we find not any intimation that they ever used this form; and does not this sufficiently prove that they did not?

A. No: for we may as well conclude from the silence of the scripture, that the Apostles did not

baptize "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," as that they did not use this prayer, since they had as strict a command to do the one as the other. But, besides, in all those places, except two, namely, Acts i. 24. and ch. iv. 24. there is nothing mentioned, but that they prayed; no mention at all of the words of their prayers; and, therefore, there is no reason why we should expect a particular intimation that they used the Lord's prayer.

Q. But are not the words of this prayer improper to be used now; because therein we pray that God's kingdom may come now, which came many ages since, viz. at our Saviour's ascension?

A. No: for though the foundations of God's kingdom were then laid, it is not yet completed; and since we know that all the world must be converted to christianity, and that Jews, Turks and Heathens still make up far the greater part of the world, we have as much reason, on this account, to pray for the coming of God's kingdom now as formerly. And if we consider those parts of the world which have already embraced christianity, we cannot think it improper to pray that they may sincerely practise what they believe, which conduces much more to the advancement of God's kingdom, than a bare profession does without such practice.

Q. What must we conclude then from what has been already said on this subject?

A. That since it appears that our Saviour prescribed the Lord's prayer as a standing form, and commanded his Apostles and other disciples to use it as such, it is not to be suspected but that they observed this command; especially since the accounts which we have from antiquity do, though the scriptures are silent in the matter, fully prove it to have been their constant custom; as appears by a cloud of witnesses, who conspire in attesting this truth.

Q. Produce a few of these testimonies.

A. First, Tertullian was, without all doubt, of

opinion that Christ delivered the Lord's prayer not as a directory only, but as a precomposed set form to be used by all Christians. For he says, "The Son taught us to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven," that is, he taught us to use the Lord's prayer; and speaking of the same prayer, he says, "Our Lord gave his disciples of the New Testament, a new form of prayer." He calls it "the prayer appointed by Christ;" the "prayer appointed by law;" and "the ordinary," that is, the usual and customary "prayer, which is to be said before our other prayers, and upon which, as a foundation, our other prayers are to be built;" and observes, that the use of it was ordained by our Saviour.

St. Cyprian tells us, that "Christ himself gave us a form of prayer, and commanded us to use it; because when we speak to the Father in the Son's words, we shall be more readily heard;" and that "there is no prayer more spiritual or true than the Lord's prayer:" therefore he most earnestly exhorts men to the use of it as often as they pray.

St. Cyril, of Jerusalem, calls it "the prayer which Christ gave his disciples, and which God hath taught us."

St. Chrysostom calls it "the prayer enjoined by law, and ordained by Christ."

Optatus takes it for granted, that this prayer is commanded.

St. Austin mentions that "our Saviour gave it to the Apostles to the intent that they should use it; that he himself taught his disciples, and by them taught us to use it; that he dictated it to us as a lawyer would put words in his client's mouth; that it is necessary for all; that it is such as all are bound to use; and that we cannot be God's children unless we use it."

St. Gregory Nyssen says, that "Christ showed his disciples how they should pray, by the words of the Lord's prayer." And Theodoret assures us, that "the Lord's prayer is a form of prayer, and

that Christ has commanded us to use it." But testimonies of this kind are numberless.

Q. What follows from hence?

A. It follows, that if the judgment of the ancient fathers may be relied on, who knew the practice of the Apostles much better than we can pretend to do, we may safely affirm that the Apostles made use of the Lord's prayer. And if it be granted that they did so, we may reasonably suppose that they enjoined the use of it. It is very improbable, indeed, that a Christian assembly would, in their public devotions, omit that prayer which was the badge of their discipleship, and so expressly enforced on them. And the very petitions of the prayer, it may be remarked, running all along in the plural number, do evidently show that it was primarily designed for the joint use of a congregation.

Q. How is it evident that the Christians of the first centuries used the Lord's prayer in their assemblies?

A. From its being always used in the celebration of the Lord's supper, which for some ages was administered every day. And St. Austin tells us in express words, that this prayer was said at God's altar daily. So that, without enlarging on the subject, we may reasonably conclude, that the Apostles and primitive Christians did join in the use of the Lord's prayer.

Q. What is the next argument to prove that the primitive Christians used stated forms of prayer?

A. From their joining in the use of psalms: for though all the psalms are not prayers, because some of them are not addressed to God, yet it is certain a great part of them are so.

Q. How does it appear that the Apostles did ever join in the use of psalms?

A. Because we are told, Acts xvi. 25. that Paul and Silas, when they were in prison, prayed and sang praises (psalms) to God: and this we must suppose

they did audibly, because the prisoners heard them; and they would have disturbed each other, had they not united in the same prayers and praises. Because also St. Paul blames the Corinthians, that when they came together, every one had a psalm, had a doctrine, &c. 1 Cor. xiv. 26. Where we must not suppose that he forbad the use of psalms in public worship, any more than he did the use of doctrines, &c. but that he is displeased with them for not having the psalm altogether; that is, for not joining in it; that so the whole congregation might attend one and the same part of divine service at the same time. From whence we may conclude, that the use of psalms was a customary thing, and that the Apostles approved of it; only ordering them to join regularly in the use of them, which we may reasonably suppose they afterwards did, since we find by the Apostle's second epistle to them, that they had reformed their abuses.

The Apostle exhorts the Ephesians to speak to themselves with psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts to the Lord, chap. v. 19. And he bids the Colossians to teach and admonish one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their hearts to the Lord, chap. iii. 16. From which texts of scripture, and several others that might be alleged, we must necessarily conclude, that joint psalmody was instituted by the Apostles as a constant part of divine worship.

Q. How does it appear that the primitive Christians continued in this practice?

A. Because Eusebius, Justin Martyr, Cyril, Socrates, Athanasius, and many others of the ancient fathers mention the churches using psalms in the public assemblies of the primitive Christians, as a practice that had universally obtained from the times of the Apostles.

Q. What do we learn from the use of psalms?

A. That the Apostles and primitive Christians, by

jointly singing such psalms in their congregations, did consequently join in the use of precomposed set forms of devotion.

Q. How does it appear that the primitive Christians used precomposed set forms in their public worship?

A. That the primitive Christians did very early use precomposed set forms in their worship, is evident from the names given to their public prayers, for they are called common prayers, constituted prayers, &c.. But that which puts the matter out of all doubt, are the liturgies ascribed to St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James; which, though corrupted by latter ages, are doubtless of great antiquity. The liturgy of St.. James was of great authority in the Church of Jerusalem, in St. Cyril's time, who has a comment upon it still extant; which St. Jerome says was written in his younger years: It is not probable that St. Cyril would have taken the pains to explain this liturgy, unless it had been of general use in the church; which we cannot suppose it would have obtained in less than seventy or eighty years. St. Cyril was chosen Bishop of Jerusalem, about the year 349; to which office, it is very well known, seldom any were promoted before they were pretty well advanced in life: if, therefore, he wrote his comment upon this liturgy in his younger years, we cannot possibly date it later than the year 340; and then allowing the liturgy to have obtained in the church about eighty years, it necessarily follows that it must have been composed in the year 260, which was not above 160 years after the apostolical age. It is, indeed, declared by Proclus, and the sixth general council, to have been St. James's own composition; and that there are forms of worship in it as ancient as the Apostles, seems highly probable; for all the form, *Sursum Corda* contained therein, is also in St. Cyril's comments; the same is likewise in the liturgies of Rome and Alexandria, and in the constitutions of Clemens, which all agree are

of great antiquity; and St. Cyprian, who lived within an hundred years after the Apostles, mentions it as a form then used and received; as does also Nicephorus. We do not deny but that these liturgies may have been corrupted in after times; but that no more overthrows the antiquity of the ground work of them, than the large additions to a building prove there was no house before. It is an easy matter to say that this liturgy could not be St. James's, because of its corruptions: but is this an argument to prove that there were no ancient liturgies in the church of Jerusalem or Alexandria, when even in Origen's time we find an entire collect produced by him out of the Alexandrian liturgy? And the like may be showed as to other churches, which by degrees came to have their liturgies much enlarged by the devout additions of some extraordinary men, who had the care of several churches afterwards; such as St. Basil and St. Chrysostom: So that notwithstanding their interpolations, the liturgies themselves are a plain demonstration of the use of divers precomposed set forms of prayer, besides the Lord's prayer and psalms, even in the first and second centuries of the church. That in Constantine's time, the church used such precomposed forms, is evident from Eusebius' church history, who tells us of Constantine's composing a prayer for the use of his soldiers: in the next chapter he gives us the words of the prayer, which makes it undeniably plain, it was a set form of words.

Q. It is true that the church of the three first centuries joined in the use of divers precomposed set forms of prayer besides the Lord's prayer and psalms; but was this the practice of the church in succeeding ages?

A. Yes; and of this fact we have undeniable testimonies. Gregory Nazianzen says, that "St. Basil composed forms of prayer." And St. Basil himself, reciting the manner of the public service that was used in the monastic oratories of his institution,

says, that "nothing was therein done, but what was consonant and agreeable to all the churches of God." The council of Laodicea expressly provides, "that the same liturgy, or form of prayer should be always used, both at the ninth hour, and in the evening." And this canon is taken into the collection of the canon of the Catholic Church; which collection was established in the fourth general council of Chalcedon, in the year 451; by which establishment the whole Christian Church was obliged to the use of liturgies, so far as the authority of a general council extends.

It were easy to add many other proofs of the same kind, within the compass of time to which those we have already produced belong; it is needless to mention such as are so obviously plain as to admit of no objection. To descend into the following ages is unnecessary; for the greatest enemies to precomposed set forms of prayer acknowledge, that in the fourth and fifth centuries, and ever after till the times of the Reformation, the joint use of them obtained all over the Christian world. And therefore we shall take it for granted, that what has been already advanced, is abundantly sufficient to prove, that the ancient Jews, our Saviour, his Apostles, and the primitive Christians, did join in the use of precomposed set forms of prayer.

Q. What is the next thing to be proved?

A. That they never joined in any other.

Q. How does it appear that the ancient Jews, our Saviour, and his Apostles never joined in other prayers before our Lord's resurrection?

A. That they never joined in any other than precomposed set forms previous to our Lord's resurrection, may very justly be concluded from our having no authority to think they ever did. For, as he that refuses to believe a matter of fact, when it is attested by a competent number of unexceptionable witnesses, is always considered to act against the dictates of reason; so does that person act no less

unreasonably, who believes a matter of fact without any evidence. And on what evidence can any man believe a matter of fact, but the testimony of those, on whose veracity and judgment, in the case, he may rely? But what testimonies can any man produce in this case? No one can pretend to any proof, either express or by consequence, within this compass of time, of the joint use of prayers conceived extempore; because there is not the smallest degree of evidence, or so much as a bare probability of it. And therefore it must, of necessity, be acknowledged, that the ancient Jews, our Saviour, and his Apostles, never joined in any other prayers than precomposed set forms, antecedent to our Lord's resurrection.

Q. How does it appear that they never joined in any other prayers afterwards?

A. As for our Saviour, we have no particular account of his praying, between the time of his resurrection and that of his ascension, and therefore can determine nothing on the subject respecting him. But, with regard to the Apostles and primitive Christians, we may prove that they never joined in any other than precomposed set forms, after our Lord's resurrection, by the same mode of reasoning that we prove they never did before his resurrection. For unless sufficient authority can be brought to prove, that they joined in the use of prayers conceived extempore, we may very reasonably conclude that they never did so.

Q. Is there any reason in particular which is of itself a strong argument, that the Apostles and primitive Christians did never join in any other than precomposed set forms of prayer?

A. Yes; the difference between precomposed set forms of prayer, and prayer conceived extempore, is so very great, and the alteration from the joint use of the one to the joint use of the other so very remarkable, that it is utterly impossible to conceive that if the joint use of extempore prayers had ever

been practised by the Apostles and first Christians, it could so soon have been laid aside by every church in the Christian world; and yet not the least notice be taken, no opposition be made, nor so much as a hint given, either of the time or reasons of its being discontinued, by any of the ancient writers whatever. But that every nation that has embraced the Christian faith should, with perfect harmony, without one single exception, as far as the most diligent search and information can reach, from the days of the Apostles to as low a period of time as any can reasonably desire, unite and agree in performing their joint worship by the use of precomposed set forms only; certainly such a unanimous practice of persons at the greatest distance both of time and place, and not only different, but perfectly opposite in other points of religion, as well as their civil interest, is a strong argument that the joint use of precomposed set forms was fixed by the Apostles in all the churches they planted, and that by the special providence of God, such mode of worship has been preserved as remarkably as the Christian sacraments themselves.

Q. What is the next thing to be considered?

A. That the precomposed set forms of prayer in which they joined, were such as their respective congregations were accustomed to, and thoroughly acquainted with.

Q. How does this appear?

A. As to the practice of the ancient Jews, our Saviour and his disciples, it cannot be doubted, but that they were accustomed to, and well acquainted with those precomposed set forms, which are contained in the scriptures; and with respect to their other additional prayers, the very same authors from whom we derive our accounts of them, do unanimously agree in attesting, that they were of constant daily use; and consequently the Jews, our Saviour, and his disciples, could not but be accustomed to, and thoroughly acquainted with them.—The matter,

therefore, is past all dispute until the gospel state commenced, and even then also it is equally clear and plain; for it has been fully shown, that the Apostles and primitive Christians did constantly use the Lord's prayer and psalms.

Q. But were there not other prayers, which made up a part of their divine service, such as the ministers themselves composed?

A. No; because the same authorities which prove that they were precomposed set forms, do also prove that the respective congregations were accustomed to them. For since the whole congregation did, with one accord, lift up their voice in an instant, and vocally join in that prayer which is recorded, Acts iv. 24; since the public prayers which the primitive Christians used in the first and second centuries were called common prayers, constituted prayers, and solemn prayers; since the liturgy of St. James was of general use in the church of Jerusalem, within 160 years after the apostolic age; since the church in Constantine's time used authorized set forms of prayer; since the council of Laodicea expressly provides that the same liturgy be constantly used, both at the ninth hour and in the evening; we say, since these things are true, we may appeal to the reason of all men, whether it was possible, in those and the like cases, for the respective congregations to be otherwise than accustomed to, and thoroughly acquainted with those precomposed set forms of prayer in which they joined.

Q. What is the last thing here to be considered?

A. That the practice of the ancient Jews, our Saviour, his Apostles, and the primitive Christians, warrants the imposition of a precomposed liturgy, both upon the clergy and laity.

Q. How does this practice warrant the imposition of a precomposed liturgy upon the laity?

A. Because, it being impossible for the laity to hold church communion without a form, we must certainly infer it was imposed upon them. It was

impossible for the laity to hold communion either with the Jewish or Christian church, unless they joined in a precomposed liturgy, because the joint use of such liturgy was their particular mode of worship; and, consequently, as many of the laity as held communion with them, must have submitted to that mode of worship.

Q. How does their practice show that a precomposed liturgy was imposed upon the clergy?

A. The clergy were obliged to use a precomposed liturgy in their public ministrations, because the use of such a liturgy was settled amongst them, and it was undoubtedly expected from the clergy that they should practise accordingly. He who is in the least versed in antiquity, must know how strict the church-governors were in those times, and how severely they would animadvert upon such daring innovators, as should offer to set up their own fancies in opposition to a settled rule. So that it is no wonder, if in the first centuries we meet with no law to establish liturgies; since those primitive patterns of obedience looked upon themselves to be as much obliged by the custom and practice of the church, as they could be by the strictest law. But we find that afterwards, when the perverseness and innovations of the clergy gave occasion, the governors of the church did, by establishing canons, oblige the clergy to the use of precomposed liturgies; as may be seen in the 18th canon of the council of Laodicea, which enjoined, that "the same liturgy should be used at the ninth hour and in the evening." This is as plain an imposition of a precomposed liturgy as ever was or can be. Thus also the second council of Milan enjoins that such prayers should be used by all, as were approved of by the council; and that none should be said in the church, but such as had been approved of by the more prudent sort of persons in a synod; which is another evidence of an imposition of a precomposed liturgy as plain as words can express.

Q. Is not the imposition of a precomposed liturgy a greater grievance to the laity, than if each pastor imposed his own prayer, conceived extempore, on his flock?

A. No; because every extempore prayer is as much imposed, and lays as great restraint upon the laity, as the imposition of a precomposed liturgy, and is as much a form of prayer to the people, as a printed book can be. Besides, when the liturgy is precomposed the laity have this advantage, they know what they have to pray for; whereas, in extempore prayers, they are obliged to depend wholly upon the ability of the speaker.

Q. But is not the imposing of a liturgy a grievance to the clergy?

A. No; since it is done, according to the situation of our church, in these states, by their Bishops, joined with the representatives of the clergy, and also of the people; so that such imposition being a joint act of their Bishops, of themselves, and of the laity, it cannot be deemed an hardship.

Q. Have not forms of public worship many great advantages?

A. Yes; forms of prayer drawn up by the wisdom, talents, and piety of the whole church, must certainly be better than those composed or uttered extempore, or even those carefully prepared by an individual minister. They enable the people to know beforehand the prayers in which they are to join. They prevent the erroneous opinions of any minister from misleading the devotions of the people. And they secure the conducting of public worship with that dignity and reverence, which are due to the Almighty Lord and Ruler of the universe. Where forms of prayer are not prescribed, every thing is left to the minister. And public extempore prayers are found often to be erroneous in point of matter, and often rendered disgusting by being presumptuous, or familiar and vulgar in point of language.

Q. Is not the form of prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church an excellent form?

A. Yes; many of the prayers in the liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church are to be found in the liturgies of the primitive ages. This liturgy was drawn up by the venerable Reformers of the English Church, and afterward improved by the revisions of some of the most eminent and pious of her divines. It is now brought to a state of perfection that renders it the most complete and excellent form of devotion of which the Christian world can boast. "The style throughout is excellent, calm without coldness, and through every where sedate, often times affecting. The pauses in the service are disposed at proper intervals. The transitions from one office of devotion to another, from confession to prayer, from prayer to thanksgiving, from thanksgiving to hearing of the word, are contrived to supply the mind with a succession of diversified engagements. The prayer at one time is continued, at another is broken by responses, or cast into short alternate ejaculations.—A Christian petitioner can have few things to ask of God, or to deprecate, which he will not find expressed in the litany for the most part, with inimitable tenderness and simplicity."*

Q. Is not a departure from the rubrics in the performance of public worship contrary to the solemn vows of ordination?

A. Yes; for every minister, at his ordination, solemnly promises to conform to the worship of the church. And the worship of the church is regulated by the rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer. Departure from the rubrics would destroy the uniformity of public worship, would bring the litany into disrepute, and tend finally to subvert it.

Q. Is not the introduction of extempore prayers into the public worship of our church also unnecessary and presumptuous?

* Archdeacon Paley.

A. Yes; because the church has fully provided for every part of public worship; and it would be presumptive in any individual minister to suppose, that by any alterations or prayers of his own, he would improve the liturgy.*

Q. Can it be justly said that the service of the church is too long and tedious?

* The following extracts from a charge delivered by Bishop White to his clergy, exhibit, in a strong point of view, the solemn obligation of the clergy strictly to conform to the discipline and worship of the church.

"In regard to what I have now laid before you on the subject of the episcopacy, and indeed to all other particulars of this discourse, comprehended in the institutions of our church, I ought not to fail to remind you of two very solemn engagements by which she binds her ministry to a submission to them. One of these engagements is the promise privately signed in the presence of the Bishop previously to ordination; the other is the answer to a question, which he proposes publicly in the service. The former stipulates for a *conformity to the doctrines and worship* of our church; and the latter is a vow of *canonical obedience to the Bishop*. Neither of these pledges can be misunderstood."†

"For any one to insinuate himself into a church with sentiments hostile to its order, and under vows which he has no intention of observing, is a profanation, that may be classed with those perjuries in certain departments of civil life, which are said to mock the administration of our laws. Let us not be content with avoiding any thing like this, but also discountenance it in others. Our church has prescribed a form of prayer; she thinks it warranted by the practice of the church in the earliest ages as far back as any remains of that practice are to be traced; and not by that only, but by the attendance of our Lord on the prescribed devotions of the temple and of the synagogue; the evidences that there were established forms being equally authentic with those of the four books containing the history of his blessed life. The plea for departing from this order is the greater increase of piety. But may not men be under the government of a piety, mixed with much error? They may; and in this instance of the violation of order they surely are. I mean where piety of any sort is the motive: for, in the greater number of the instances falling under my observation, I have been compelled to ascribe it to *mere vanity and the exaltation of self*."‡

† Bishop White's Charge, p. 46. ‡ P. 28, 29.

A. No; because there is great variety in the service; exhortation, confession, supplication, reading the word of God, and praising his holy name being mingled together. The responses also tend to increase this variety, and to keep up their attention. The liturgy is altogether so excellent, that it would be difficult to tell what parts could with propriety be omitted. They who remember that the worship of God is the principal object of Christians in their public assembles, will not object to the length of the service.

Q. When and by whom were extempore prayers first made use of in public worship?

A. Praying extempore was first set up in opposition to the English liturgy in the year 1570, by one friar Comin, who, to divide Protestants, and serve the ends of popery, began to pray extempore with such fervor, that he deluded many, and was amply rewarded for it by the Pope; and after him Thomas Heath did the same. See Foxes and Firebrands.

Q. What is Mr. Calvin's opinion of forms of prayer?

A. He delivers his judgment in his well known epistles to the duke of Somerset in this manner: "As for a form of prayers and ecclesiastical rites, I do highly approve that there should be a certain one, from which it should not be lawful for the pastor in his office to depart."

CHAPTER II.

Of the Order for Daily Morning and Evening Prayer.

1 CORINTHIANS xiv. 15.

I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.

I. *Of Prayer in general.*

Q. WHAT *is prayer?*

A. It is the offering up of our desires to God; in which the soul has the honour, and advantage also, of breathing forth its wishes to our Maker, lodging them in the bosom and heart of its Intercessor, and, through him, petitioning relief in all its necessities and wants.

Q. *What are the grounds of this duty?*

A. The insufficiency of man to help himself, and the sufficiency of God for his relief and support: for, says the Apostle, "In him we live, and move, and have our being." Acts xvii. 28.

Q. *What encouragement have we to comply with this duty?*

A. The promise of Christ, saying, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Mat. vii. 7.

Q. *But is all prayer effectual to this end?*

A. No; "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss." James iv. 3.

Q. *How then must our prayers be qualified, that they may be effectual?*

A. They must be constant and regular, and not by fits and starts; and so we are required "to pray without ceasing:" and they must be earnest and diligent; for, says St. James, "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James v. 16.

Q. What does St. Gregory Nyssen say of prayer?

A. That it "is a work of the same dignity and honour, wherein the angels and saints of heaven themselves are employed. It is an advocate for the guilty, a redemption for the captive, a rest for the wearied, and a comfort for the sorrowful. It is our watch-tower whilst we sleep, and our safeguard whilst we are awake." St. Greg. Nyssen. Nom. de Orat.

Q. What does St. Chrysostom say of such as neglect prayer?

A. "When I see a man," says he, "that loveth not his prayers, and is not frequent at his devotions, I presently conclude him to be a miserable creature, and to have nothing in him at all that is worthy of commendation. St. Chrysost. de orundo Deum.

Q. And what does he say of the efficacy of prayer?

A. That, "as the light of the sun is to the eye of the body, so is prayer to the soul." Idem, ibid. And further adds, that "he cannot but admire and wonder at the great love of God towards man, for vouchsafing him so high an honour, as familiarly to speak unto him by prayer." Idem, ibid.

Q. Is it sufficient to worship God in private only?

A. No: For since God requires what is both public and private, the performance of the one will not justify us in the omission of the other. Divine worship is that by which we do, in a more immediate manner, honour God, by acknowledging the perfections of his nature; and the more publicly and solemnly this is done, the more is God honoured: and therefore, how devout and pious soever we may be in private, we must not forsake the assembling ourselves together for the worship of God, as the Apostle enjoins. Heb. x. 25.

Q. But may we not neglect the public worship of God, provided we live virtuous and sober lives?

A. No; for God requires "we should live, not only soberly and righteously, but also godly in this present world." Tit. ii. 12. The very Heathens

themselves did not live without performing some public worship to those whom they acknowledged to be gods. "All people," as the prophet saith, "walk in the name of the Lord their God." Micah iv. 5. So that we are worse than Heathens, if, under pretence of living virtuously, which some of them also did, we neglect all public adoration and worship to that one only true God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Q. What is our duty, particularly, when we are engaged in this solemn exercise?

A. Carefully to observe the motions of our minds; and when we find that our thoughts are roving, we must recal them, and keep them, as much as we can, attentive and fixed on God: and God will not reject the prayers of such as truly fear him, because of some involuntary distraction. God chiefly regards the integrity of our hearts, and the sincerity of our endeavours; and, when he finds this, he will, for Christ's sake, pardon what is amiss, through unavoidable infirmity.

Q. But is it not a practice too common amongst us, to perform the service of God in a careless and negligent manner?

A. Yes; particularly amongst the young and giddy part of the congregation; whose indecent and irreverent carriage in the public assemblies is too evident a proof, that they have little or no regard to the service of God. For we may, in our churches, and in the time of prayer, see some whispering, some sleeping, some sitting as if the minister was speaking to them, not they offering up prayers to God: There are very few bended knees, very few elevated hands and eyes, very few in humble, decent postures, as become persons engaged in God's service, with devout and attentive minds. We know God commands us to *ask in faith*, which implies the exercise of the mind, to *labour fervently in prayers*: and we cannot pray with faith and fervency, if we neither understand our prayers, nor mind them.

And this practice amongst us, as it is not through error, so neither is it through unavoidable infirmity: for though we cannot avoid all disturbance of mind, yet, such a degree of it we may, as removes the heart from God, and leaves only a little lip-labour; and so turns true piety and devotion into vile formality and hypocrisy.

Q. How ought we to prepare ourselves for public worship?

A. By a serious reflection upon the importance of the duty; with fervent prayers for God's assistance to enforce it upon our minds: that we may be able to serve him, though not with a perfect and undisturbed attention and devotion, yet with such a degree of it, as will, through the intercession of Christ, procure the acceptance of our prayers and praises with our heavenly Father. The moment we enter the church doors, says a primitive writer, we drop all compliments to our fellow mortals, and make our address to God alone. The Jews were directed to meditate a little in silence after they had entered the synagogue.

A Prayer at our first entrance into the Church.

"O Lord, I am now in thine house. Assist, I pray thee, and accept my services. Enable me, and all those that shall this day meet in thy name, to worship thee in spirit and in truth.

Let thy Holy Spirit help our infirmities, and dispose our hearts to seriousness, attention, and devotion. And grant, that we may improve this opportunity to the honour of thy holy name, and the benefit of our souls, through Jesus Christ our Lord." *Amen.*

II. *Of the Introductory Sentences.*

Q. How does the church require the minister to begin the daily morning and evening prayer?

A. By reading one or more solemn sentences, selected from holy scripture; the whole congregation seriously and deliberately rising up at the same time.

Q. Why are these sentences prefixed to the daily morning and evening prayer?

A. To bring the minds of the people to a spiritual frame, and to prepare them for the great and important duty upon which they are now to enter.

Q. Why are these sentences selected from the holy scriptures?

A. To the intent that we may not dare to disobey them; since they proceed from the mouth of that God whom we are going to address, whose pity we are about to implore, and who may justly reject petitions if we hearken not to his voice.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the choice of these sentences?

A. That the venerable compilers of our liturgy have evinced their usual judgment, judiciously selecting such plain texts of holy writ, as are most likely to impress our minds with a devout and awful sense of the divine presence; to bring all sorts of sinners to repentance, and also to encourage them to repent.

Q. For what reason have they selected so many?

A. Because there are a variety of dispositions, and because the same man also is not always in the same temper.

Q. How are these sentences appointed to be read?

A. It is left to the discretion of the officiating minister, to use such of them every day as he may judge best adapted to his own and his people's spiritual circumstances.

Q. In what manner is he to read them?

A. Not with a careless and indifferent air, but after such a method as may effectually show, that he feels, and is sensible of the importance of the solemn action in which he is engaged.

III. *Of the Exhortation.*

Q. What follows next to the introductory sentences?

A. A solemn and seasonable exhortation to be read by the minister alone, he and the people all reverently continuing to stand.

Q. What is the design of this exhortation?

A. To illustrate and apply to our hearts the preceding sentences, and to direct us how to perform the following confession, so as to render it acceptable to God, and beneficial to ourselves.

Q. Whence does the exhortation infer the necessity of confession?

A. From the word of God; and when it has convinced us of the necessity of confession, it directs us how it is to be performed, and then invites us to that important duty, for which it has so well prepared us; and thus too connects the preceding sentences with the following general confession.

Q. How does the minister encourage us?

A. By offering to accompany us to the throne of grace; being well assured that our heavenly Father, whose ambassador he is, stands ready to receive us, and is graciously disposed to grant our requests.

Q. What does he promise us?

A. That he will put words into our mouths, and speak with us and for us; only we must express the humbleness of our minds, by the lowliness of our bodies, and assent to, and seal every sentence by repeating it reverently after him.

Q. Must the congregation repeat the exhortation too after the minister?

A. No; they must not repeat it, but silently and seriously attend to what he delivers, and particularly and duly weigh every word and expression in it.

Q. What ought the congregation especially to remember?

A. That, however mean and contemptible the

person or worldly circumstances of the minister of Christ Jesus may appear, from him we hear the voice of God, commanding us to acknowledge our transgressions, to make humble confession of our sins, and to repent; and that if we disregard the command, we disregard not man, but God.

Q. What rule is it reasonable the minister should observe, between the end of the exhortation and the beginning of the confession?

A. To make such a pause as that the whole congregation may have sufficient time deliberately, and without the least hurry, to put themselves into a suitable posture for prayer, to direct their minds to God, and to fix them upon the divine Majesty, that they may be thoroughly composed for so solemn and heavenly an exercise by the time the minister begins the confession.

IV. *Of the General Confession.*

Q. What follows next to the exhortation?

A. A general confession, to be said by the whole congregation after the minister, all kneeling; which should be done in a very decent and devout manner.

Q. Is it consonant to the practice of the primitive Christians, for the whole congregation to repeat the confession with the minister?

A. Yes; as we learn from St. Basil, who tells us, that the Christians, "in all churches, immediately upon their entering into the house of prayer, made confession of their sins to God, with much sorrow, distress, and a profusion of tears, every man pronouncing his own confession with his own mouth."*

Q. Why are the minister and people required to kneel in prayer?

A. Because it is the most proper position; and in this attitude the early Christians generally offered up both their public and private supplications.

* Basil, Ep. 63.

Q. Have we any scripture examples for kneeling at prayer?

A. Yes; for thus Solomon of old prayed, at the dedication of the temple, and before all the congregation of Israel, as we read, 1 Kings viii. 54. "And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he rose up from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling upon his knees, with his hands spread up to heaven." Thus Daniel kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and gave thanks before his God. Chap. vi. 10. And thus our blessed Saviour also prayed earnestly in his agony, as mentioned by St. Luke, chap. xxii. "And he kneeled down and prayed." In the same attitude Peter prayed, when he raised Dorcas from the dead. Acts ix. And Saul, after his exhortation to the elders of Miletus, kneeled down and prayed with them all. Acts xx. 36. With the disciples at Tyre, Paul and Silas kneeled down on the shore and prayed. Acts xxi. 5. Paul expressed prayer by the attitude that with propriety attends it; "I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. iii. 14. And to mention but one instance more, in Acts vii. 59, 60, it is said, that when the Jews "stoned St. Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, he kneeled down," &c.

Q. Why is the confession placed at the beginning of the prayers?

A. Because God has assured us he will not hear those who remain in their sins. Isaiah i. 15. John xi. It therefore behoves all the congregation to be early in their attendance at the house of prayer, that they may have time to compose their minds by holy meditation, to reflect upon their offences, and to prepare for joining in this confession, so as to have the benefit of absolution.

Q. Have they who would pray effectually always begun their prayers with confession?

A. Yes; (Ezra ix. 5, 6. Dan. ix. 4, 5.) for when

the guilt of sin is once removed by penitential acknowledgments, there is no bar left to God's grace and mercy.

Q. Is not this form of confession too general?

A. No; for though it is expressed in general terms, yet at the same time, by mentioning sins both of omission and commission, it is so particular, that it includes every kind of wickedness which it is possible to designate.

Q. If it had been more particular, would it have answered the design of it, as well as it now does?

A. No; because a common confession ought to be so contrived, as every person present may truly speak it as his own case, and reduce even his most particular and personal faults to the general expressions of it.

Q. May it not be justly objected to this confession, that there is no mention of original sin in it?

A. No; because we confess and bewail to God, "that we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts," which plainly implies that our hearts are evil and corrupt, and such as we ought not to follow, and, consequently, by these words, original sin is sufficiently understood.

Q. What rule ought the minister to observe in reading the confession?

A. Since the church has enjoined, that it shall be said by the whole congregation after him, he would do well to take care, that he does not begin a new portion thereof, before the people have had time to repeat the former with due deliberation. For nothing certainly can be more indecent than the hurrying over such an excellent form as this, which ought to be so uttered, that the hearts of the people may go along with their words, that they may pass on leisurely from one thing to another, and that the whole may be offered to God as a rational service.

Q. And what ought the people also to remember?

A. That when they are repeating the several portions of the confession after the minister, they are

speaking to God, and engaging in the grand business of repentance, and of obtaining his reconciliation and favour. They ought not, therefore, to behave themselves after a careless and slovenly manner, nor address the throne of grace with an inarticulate motion of the lips; a practice which betokens irreverence, and proves that they do not mind what they say, or to whom they speak; but with an humble, yet earnest tone of voice, suited to the solemnity of this confession, the vast importance of the duty of prayer, and the indispensable necessity of a due performance of it. These considerations should sink deep into their hearts, and prevail upon them so to perform this duty, that it may obtain the remission, and not add to the number of their sins.

V. *Of the Absolution.*

Q. What follows next to the confession?

A. The absolution, which is to be pronounced by the priest alone; for the congregation having confessed their sins, with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, and remaining depressed under the sense of their iniquities, are now in a situation that particularly requires the aid of spiritual consolation.

Q. May the people repeat the absolution with the priest?

A. No; they must not repeat it, as is evident by the rubric, but only silently and seriously listen to him whilst he pronounces it, and at the end of it give their assent to it with a hearty *Amen*.

Q. Why are they required to say Amen?

A. To signify how firmly they believe, how highly they value, and earnestly desire those comforts, which the absolution is designed to convey. But here let it be noted, that whilst it affords to the good the greatest consolation and support, it gives the wicked no ground either to presume or to despair of God's mercy.

Q. In what posture is the priest required to pronounce the absolution?

A. Standing; because it is an act of his authority in declaring the will of God, whose ambassador he is.

Q. In what posture are the people to receive it?

A. Kneeling, in token of that humility and reverence, with which they ought to receive the joyful tidings of a pardon and absolution from Almighty God.

Q. Is a deacon permitted to pronounce the absolution?

A. No; and much less a mere layman: hence the custom of clergymen who are only ordained to the office of deacons, to pass over the absolution, reading, instead thereof, some short collect, or otherwise proceeding directly to the Lord's prayer.

Q. Why is not a deacon permitted to pronounce the absolution?

A. Because it would be to usurp an authority never committed to him; and the rubric itself supposes that he who pronounces the absolution is a minister in priest's orders.

Q. Is this solemn declaration always attended with the remission of sins?

A. Yes; provided the people are properly disposed, and perform the conditions required on their part. Christ having committed to his ministering servants "the ministry of reconciliation," they are empowered to convey with authority forgiveness of sins from Almighty God to "all who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel."

VI. *Of the Lord's Prayer.*

Q. What follows the absolution?

A. The Lord's prayer, which ought to have stood in the first place, but that it would have been irreverent and improper in us to have called God *our Father*, in the endearing sense in which we now use

the words, till we had confessed, and repented of our sins and transgressions against him.

Q. What is particularly to be observed concerning this prayer?

A. That it was composed by Jesus himself, our glorious advocate, who knew both his Father's sufficiency and our wants, and may therefore assure us, that it contains every thing fit for us to ask, or his Father to grant.

Q. Why ought we to add this form to all our prayers?

A. To make up their defects, and to recommend them to our heavenly Father; who, if he cannot deny us, when we ask in his Son's name, can much less do so, when we speak in his word also.*

Q. Is the Lord's prayer essential to Christians?

A. Yes; it is as essentially necessary to all the disciples, and true followers of Christ, as the Lord's supper, and may no more be omitted in their public addresses to God, under pretence of using other words equivalent, than the Christian form of baptism may be altered.

Q. What is the observation of Grotius concerning this prayer?

A. That so averse was our Lord to unnecessary innovation, and the affectation of novelty, that he "who had not the spirit by measure, John iii. 34, and in whom were all the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge," Col. xi. 3, selected the words and phrases of this prayer, principally from forms at that time well known among the Jews.

Q. Repeat the rubric at the head of this prayer.

A. "Then the minister shall kneel, and say the Lord's prayer; the people still kneeling, and repeating it with him here, and wheresover else it is used in divine service."

* Cyprian de Orat. p. 139, 140.

Q. Why are the people required to repeat the Lord's prayer with the minister?

A. Here, and wheresoever else this prayer is used, the whole congregation are required to join with the minister, partly that the people ignorantly educated may sooner learn it; and partly to signify how boldly we may approach the Father, when we address him in the Son's words.

Q. What is proper to be observed concerning the use of this prayer?

A. That the offering up of this prevailing supplication, with true devotion, and zeal of heart, affords to God that glory, to the weakest man that aid, and to the most perfect Christian that solid comfort, which is unspeakable.

VII. *Of the Responses.*

Q. What follow after the Lord's prayer?

A. The responses, consisting of prayers and praises.

Q. Why are they called responses?

A. From the people's answering the minister; which is agreeable to a very ancient practice of the Jews, who used to recite their public hymns and prayers alternately; and many of the Fathers assure us that the primitive Christians imitated them therein; so that there is no old liturgy, wherein there are not such short and devout sentences as these.

Q. Should not all the congregation join the minister with an audible voice in the responses?

A. Yes; for the beauty and solemnity of the service is entirely lost when the people leave the repeating of the responses to the clerk; and in this case also they do not perform their part in the solemn worship of God, but are as culpable for their neglect herein, as the minister would be for the neglect of his duty.

Q. What is the design of these responses?

A. To quicken and invigorate the people's devo-

tion, and, by a grateful variety, to engage their attention, too apt to wander, during the performance of sacred offices; for since they have their share of duty, they must wait till their turn come, and prepare for the next response; whereas, when the minister does all, the people naturally grow listless, as if they were wholly unconcerned in the service before them.

Q. Whence is the first response taken?

A. The first response, viz. "O Lord, open thou our lips, and our mouth shall show forth thy praise," is taken from the fifty-first psalm, and is fitly placed here with respect to those sins we lately confessed; for if we are as sensible of our guilt as we ought to be, it will be needful for us to desire such evidences of our pardon, as may free us from the terrors which seal up our lips, and then we shall be in a suitable disposition to praise God heartily in the following psalms.

Q. How do we proceed next?

A. Having a good confidence that our pardon is granted, in imitation of David, after confessing his sins, declaring his distress, and imploring pardon and deliverance, we turn our petition into praises, our sighs and groans into songs of thanksgivings; rising up in token, that we lift up our hearts to adore and magnify the eternal and ever blessed Trinity, ascribing glory to the Father, who grants us absolution; to the Son, through whom it was purchased and obtained; and to the Holy Ghost, by whom it is sealed and dispensed.

Q. Why is the Gloria Patri *so called?*

A. From the two initial words in Latin, in which language they signify, "Glory be to the Father," &c. It is sometimes called the lesser Doxology, in contradistinction to the angelical hymn, or great Doxology, which begins, "Glory be to God on high," and is by our church appointed to be said in the office for the holy communion, and may likewise

be used at the end of the hymns and psalms by the minister and people instead of the other.

Q. How was the Gloria Patri *used in the primitive church?*

A. It was the custom from the beginning of christianity, as the ancients relate, to give "glory to the only Father, with the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Q. By whom was this orthodox form corrupted?

A. By the Arians, who attempted to change it into "Glory be to the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Ghost."

Q. What was the consequence of this corruption?

A. In consequence of this, the church enlarged the old form, and annexed it to their liturgies, saying, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now and ever, world without end." And so the Greek church still uses it; but the Western church, in a council,* added these words, "as it was in the beginning," to show that this was the primitive faith, and the old orthodox way of praising God.

Q. How do we proceed next?

A. The penitential part of the service being completed, we proceed to the eucharistic: as an introduction to which, the minister, addressing the congregation, exhorts them to praise the Lord; and the people, to show their obedience to the pious exhortation of the minister, and to evince their desire to join with him in praising God, immediately answer, "The Lord's name be praised."

Q. Is it not an impropriety to divide our prayers into such small parts and versicles?

A. No; for though there be an alteration and division in the utterance, yet the prayer is but one continued form; and though the church requires that the minister speak one portion, and the people the other, yet both the minister and the people ought mentally to offer up and speak to God, what is vo-

* Concil. Varense. chap. iii. tom. ii. col. 729.

orily offered up and spoken by each of them respectively.

Q. What rule must both the minister and people observe, that they may be the better enabled to do this?

A. To take care that they do not confound and disturb each other, by beginning their several portions too soon. The minister's first versicle must be finished, before the people utter a word of the second; and the people must have time to finish the second before the minister begins the third, &c. so that both the minister and people may have time deliberately to offer every portion, and to make all of them together one continued act of devotion.

VIII. *Of the Anthem, commonly called the Venite Exultemus.*

Q. What follows after the responses?

A. In the morning service an anthem, commonly called, the *Venite Exultemus*, except on those days for which other anthems are appointed; and except also, when it is used in the course of the psalms, on the nineteenth day of the month.*

Q. Whence is this anthem taken?

A. Partly from the ninety-fifth, and partly from the ninety-sixth psalm. The first of which was designed originally for the public service, on the feast of tabernacles, as some, or on the Sabbath-day, as others think;† and the latter was composed upon the occasion of bringing the ark to the city of David.

Q. By whom has the first of these psalms been used in public worship?

A. By all the Christian world, as the liturgies of St. Chrysostom and St. Basil witness for the Greek

* This order is given to avoid repetition.

† Grotius was of the former, and Calvin of the latter opinion.

church, and the testimony of St. Augustine for the African,* and all the ancient offices and capitulars for the Western.

Q. What does St. Ambrose say of it?

A. That it was the custom of the church in his time to begin their service with it;† for which reason in the Latin office it is called, *The Invitatory Psalm;* it being always sung with a strong, loud voice, like the sound of a trumpet, to hasten those people into the church, who were in the cemetery or church-yard, or any other adjacent parts, waiting for the beginning of prayers.‡

Q. Why is this anthem, as it now stands, placed here?

A. Because it is a proper introduction to the psalms in general, which immediately follow; for in the repetition of it, the people mutually exhort and encourage each other to the performance of psalmody in an acceptable method.

Q. How should this anthem be performed?

A. In a very cheerful, but solemn manner; that our whole demeanour may express that inward devotion of our souls, so necessary to render our praises pleasing and acceptable to God.

IX. *Of the Psalms.*

Q. What follows after the anthem commonly called the Venite Exultemus?

A. "A portion of the psalms, as they are appointed, or one of the selections of psalms set forth by this church;" which order of the service is not only agreeable to reason and the nature of things, but is conformable to the practice of the primitive church.

Q. Why do the psalms follow next?

* Serm. 176. de verb. Apost. c. i.
† Serm. de Deip.
‡ Durand. de Divin. Office. Rationat.

A. Because, if we have duly performed the preceding parts of the liturgy, we shall be disposed to sing David's psalms with David's spirit.

Q. What does St. Basil say of the psalms?

A. That, in his time, they were used in all the churches of God.*

Q. Wherein appears the propriety of using the psalms in Christian worship?

A. Because they are a collection of sacred hymns, composed by devout members of the Jewish church, for the purpose of praising God, both on public and private occasions; and being dictated by the Holy Spirit of God, are so adapted to all states and conditions of the church, that they are used by Christians as well as Jews.

Q. Why are the psalms oftener used than any other part of scripture?

A. Because they not only contain a variety of devotions, agreeable to all degrees and circumstances of men; but because every man may, without much difficulty, either directly, or by way of accommodation, apply most of them to his own case.

Q. But may we not herein be justly accused of novelty?

A. No; for it is certain that the temple-service consisted chiefly of forms taken out of the book of Psalms, 1 Chron. xvi. 1—37. xx. 1, 2. And the prayers of the modern Jews are also mostly gathered thence.† The Christians undoubtedly used them in their public service in the times of the Apostles, 1 Cor. xiv. 26. Col. iii. 16. and in the following ages they were repeated so often at church, that the most illiterate Christians could rehearse them at their ordinary work.

Q. Why are the psalms said or sung by course?

A. Because this is perfectly congenial to the usage of antiquity, and seems to be as old as Christianity

* Basil, Epis. 63, tom. ii. p. 843.
† Buxtorf. Synag. Judaic. cap. 16.

itself;* is sanctioned by the recommendation of the best and wisest among the Fathers; has been ratified by respectable councils, and the most approved ecclesiastical laws; and is obviously calculated to keep up the attention, and assist the devotion of the people. Nor is it to be doubted, but that the Christians received this practice from the Jews; for it is plain that several of the psalms, which were composed for the public use of the temple, were written in Amœbœick, or alternate verse.† To which temple service it is probable the vision of Isaiah alluded, which he saw of Seraphim, crying one to another, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, &c.

Q. What does St. Basil testify concerning this practice?

A. That the people, in his time, "rising before it was light, went to the house of prayer, and there, in great agony of soul, and incessant showers of tears, made confession of their sins to God; and then from their prayers proceeded to singing of psalms, dividing themselves into two parts, and singing by turns."‡ Since which time it has been thought so reasonable and decent a custom, as to be universally practised.

Q. But does not the alternate use of the psalms deprive both the minister and the people alternately of divers verses, which they would otherwise speak to God as their own prayers?

A. No; because either of them may join mentally in all the verses, in the same manner as the friends of extemporary prayer join mentally in the whole of what is pronounced by the minister alone.

Q. In what posture are the psalms to be repeated?

A. When we repeat the psalms and hymns we

* The alternate recitation of psalms and hymns in the Christian church is easily traced back to the close of the first century. See Pliny's celebrated letter to Trajan.

† As the 124th and 117th, &c.

‡ Basil, Epist. ad Clerum. Neocæsariens. Epis. 63. tom. ii. Vide Const. Apos. l. 2. ch. lvii.

stand, which has usually been considered as the most proper attitude for praise and thanksgiving, that by the erection of our bodies we may express the elevation of our souls.

Q. Is there no other reason of our standing?

A. Yes; it is because some parts of the psalms are directed to God, and others are not: as therefore it would be very improper to kneel at those parts which are not directed to him; so it would be very indecent to sit when we repeat those that are. And, therefore, because both these parts, viz. those which are, and those which are not directed to God, are so frequently altered, and mingled one with another, that the most suitable posture for each of them cannot always be used, standing is prescribed as a posture which best suits together.

Q. Is this posture also consonant to the practice of the Jewish church recorded in scripture?

A. Yes; for we read, that "while the Priests and Levites were offering up praises to God, all Israel stood.

Q. What do we learn from the ritualists of the church in this respect?

A. That when they came to the psalms they always showed the affection of their souls by this posture of their bodies.*

Q. What does the church direct concerning the use of the Gloria Patri?

A. That at the end of every psalm, and of all the hymns, except the *Te Deum*, MAY be said or sung the *Gloria Patri;* and that at the end of the whole portion or selection of psalms for the day, SHALL be said or sung the *Gloria Patri*, or else the *Gloria in Excelsis.*

Q. How was the Gloria Patri *used by the eastern and western churches?*

A. In some parts of the eastern church it was formerly repeated at the end of the last psalm,

* Cassian. lib. xi. ch. 12.

which was called their *Antiphona*, or *Allelujah*, because they always selected for the concluding psalm one of those which had the title of *Allelujah* prefixed to it; but in all the western churches, that of Rome excepted, the ancient practice was to repeat it at the end of every psalm. With us, this circumstance is left optional with the minister and people. However, there appears to be a peculiar propriety in the use of the doxology at the end of every psalm, since it serves as a general application to each of them. And besides, as a penitential psalm may be followed by a psalm of thanksgiving, and that succeeded by one of adoration or prophecy, if they were not separated by this doxology, or something of the like nature, subjects very distant and distinct might be strangely and improperly united.

Q. Why is this glorification used at the end of the psalms?

A. To signify that we believe that the same God is worshipped by Christians as by Jews; the same God that is glorified in the psalms, having been from the beginning, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as well as at present.

Q. But is not the Gloria Patri *an addition to the psalms?*

A. It is no real addition, but only used as a necessary expedient to turn the Jewish psalms into Christian hymns, as they were before intended for the use of the synagogue.

Q. Is it not an objection to the use of some of the psalms, that they appear to contain imprecations on David's personal enemies?

A. No; because David, in those passages, is not speaking in his own person, but in the person of the Messiah, of whom he was a type; and as an inspired prophet, imprecates vengeance on the finally impenitent enemies of the Messiah and his kingdom. And we may with awful reverence repeat these just denunciations of the Almighty against the irreclaimable enemies of the person and king-

dom of his blessed Son. Besides, the imprecations may be so translated as to become *predictions*.

Bishop Sanderson's Opinion of the Psalms.

"The Psalms of David are the treasury of christian comfort, fitted for all persons and all necessities; able to raise the soul from dejection by the frequent mention of God's mercies to repentant sinners; to stir up holy desires; to increase joy; to moderate sorrow; to nourish hope, and teach us patience, by waiting God's leisure; to beget a trust in the mercy, power, and providence of our Creator; and to cause a resignation of ourselves to his will; and then, and not till then, to believe ourselves happy."

Bishop Horne's Account of the Psalms.

"The Psalms are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world; the dispensations of providence, and the economy of grace; the transactions of the patriarchs; the exodus of the children of Israel; their journey through the wilderness, and settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood, and ritual; the exploits of their great men, wrought through faith; their sins and captivities; their repentances and restorations; the sufferings and victories of David; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon; the advent of the Messiah, with its effects and consequences; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, and priesthood; the effusion of the spirit; the conversion of the nations; the rejection of the Jews; the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian church; the end of the world; the general judgment; the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and King. These are

the subjects here presented to our meditations. We are instructed how to conceive of them aright, and to express the different affections, which, when so conceived of, they must excite in our minds. They are, for this purpose, adorned with the figures, and set off with all the graces of poetry; and poetry itself is designed yet farther to be recommended by the charms of music, thus consecrated to the service of God; that so delight may prepare the way for improvement, and pleasure become the handmaid of wisdom, while every turbulent passion is calmed by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the harp of the son of Jesse."

X. *Of the Lessons.*

Q. What follows after the psalms?

A. Two lessons, with the intervention only of a hymn, according to the calendar, or table of lessons; which are very judiciously selected, one out of the Old Testament, the other out of the New.

Q. Why are the lessons placed here?

A. Because our hearts being now elevated to God, and our affections warmed by celebrating his praises in the psalms, we are in a suitable temper and disposition to listen with attention and reverence to what he shall speak to us in his word. And thus too a respite or intermission is given to the bent of our minds; for as they were required to be active in the psalms, it is sufficient if in the lessons they are attentive.

Q. Why is one lesson taken out of the Old Testament, and the other out of the New?

A. To show the harmony and connection that exist between the covenants, the law and the gospel; for that which was mysteriously represented in the Old Testament, as under a shadow, in signs and figures, is, in the New, more explicitly revealed; things which are in the former prefigured, are in the gospel fulfilled.

Q. Why is the lesson out of the Old Testament read first?

A. That the minds of the hearers may be gradually led from darker revelations to clearer views, and prepared by the veils of the law to bear the light breaking forth in the gospel.

Q. What is the antiquity of lessons?

A. Justin Martyr says, "It was a custom in his time to read lessons out of the Prophets and Apostles in the assembly of the faithful."* And the council of Laodicea, held in the beginning of the fourth century, ordered "lessons to be mingled with the psalms." And Cassian tells us, that "it was the constant custom throughout Egypt to have two lessons, one out of the Old Testament, and another out of the New, read immediately after the psalms; a practice," he says, "so ancient, that it cannot be known whether the institution was of human, apostolic, or divine appointment:" and he, with many others, is disposed to attribute it to the ministry of Angels.

Q. Has this practice been peculiar to the Christians only?

A. No; it was constantly adopted by the Jews also, who divided the books of Moses into as many portions as there are weeks in the year; that so, one of those portions being read every Sabbath-day, the whole might be read every year. And to this answers that expression of St. James, that "Moses was read in the synagogue every Sabbath-day." And that to this portion of the law, they added a lesson out of the Prophets, we may infer from the 13th chapter of Acts, wherein it is mentioned, that the Law and the Prophets were both read in the synagogue where St. Paul was present, and that the Prophets were read at Jerusalem every Sabbath-day.

Q. How often are the books of the Old and New Testament read through?

* Apol. i. cap. lxxxvi. p. 131.

A. The whole of the New Testament, in which Christians are more nearly concerned, is read through, except the book of Revelations, three times a year; and the far greater part of the Old Testament is also read through once a year.

Q. What posture does the church prescribe for the minister in reading the lessons?

A. The scripture being the word of God, and so a declaration of his will, the reading of it, or making it known to the people, is an act of authority, and therefore the minister who reads the lessons is to stand.

Q. How is the minister directed to give notice to the people what chapter he reads?

A. By saying, "Here beginneth such a chapter, or a verse of such a chapter, of such a book:" that the people, if they have their Bibles or books of lessons* with them, may, by looking over them, be more attentive.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the care of the primitive church in this respect?

A. That it was very remarkable; for before the reader began, sometimes the Bishop addressed the people with this salutation, "Peace be unto you." An assistant deacon stood up, and with a loud voice said, "Let us listen my brethren." And then the reader himself invites his audience to attention, by introducing the lesson with these words, "Thus saith the Lord."

Q. How is the minister, with us, directed to give notice that the lesson is ended?

A. By saying, "Here endeth the first or second lesson;" that the people may be prepared to join him in the hymn which, according to the rubric, is to follow the lesson.

* Some time past I was at the pains and expense to compile and publish the lessons of the church, in the same order as they are appointed to be read in all the Sundays and holy-days throughout the year; a few copies of which may be had of John C. Totten, Chatham-street.

Q. What particular rule would it be prudent for the minister to adopt before he begins the lessons?

A. To make a small pause, that the congregation, who generally sit down, may be perfectly quiet, and not the least noise be heard in the church, when any lesson begins; to the end that every person present may distinctly hear the whole of it, and that the greater respect and reverence may be shown to the word of God read to them.

Q. In what posture are the people to hear the lessons read?

A. There is no particular posture prescribed for them, but in former times they always stood, to show their reverence. It is recorded of the Jews in the book of Nehemiah, that when Ezra opened the book of the law in the sight of the people, all the people stood up. And in the first ages of Christianity those only were permitted to sit who, by reason of old age or some other infirmity, were not able to stand the whole time of divine service. And it is very observable, that another ceremony, used in some places by the Christians of those times, immediately before the reading of the lessons, was the washing their hands, as a significant emblem of the pure affection with which we must hear and receive the word of God, if we expect to profit by its instructions, and are desirous to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. This ceremony is said to be still used by the Turks before they touch their Alcoran, who also write thereupon, "Let no unclean person touch this;" which should excite us, at least, to express such outward reverence for the word of God, as may testify a due regard to its divine Author.

XI. *Of the Hymns after the first Lesson.*

Q. What follows after the first lesson, at morning and evening prayer?

A. At morning prayer, the hymn called the *Te*

Deum Laudamus, or that which is called *Benedicite*; and at evening prayer the ninety-eighth psalm, except when it is read in the ordinary course of the psalms, on the 19th day of the month, or else the ninety-second psalm.

Q. Why do these hymns stand next?

A. Because having heard the comfortable promises or just threats of the Almighty, and being persuaded by the precepts, or warned by the examples contained in the first lesson, it is very proper we should immediately praise the Inspirer of the sacred volume from which it is extracted, for illuminating our minds; for quickening our affections; for reviving our hopes; for awakening our fears; and for confirming our resolutions of piety.

Q. What is the antiquity of hymns?

A. The use of hymns among Christians is undoubtedly as old as the times of the Apostles: and we learn both from the observation of St. Augustine, and from the ancient canons and authentic records of the church, that hymns were intermingled with the other part of the service, and in particular, that after the reading of a portion of the Old and New Testament, a psalm or hymn was usually sung, that by this grateful variety the minds of the people might be secured against distraction, relieved from languor, and enabled to proceed with attention and fervour.

Q. Wherein appears the reasonableness of hymns after the lessons?

A. Reason calls for this interposition of hymns, on account of the great benefit we may receive from the word of God: for if we daily bless him for our ordinary meat and drink, we are much more bound to glorify him for the food of our souls.

Q. Why are the Te Deum Laudamus *and* Benedicite, *so called?*

A. The first of these is called *Te Deum Laudamus*, from the three initial words of the Latin, in which language it was originally composed: they

are translated, We praise thee, O God: the second is called *Benedicite*, for the same reason, the beginning of it in Latin being *Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino*, "O all ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord." The former of these hymns is now most frequently used, and the latter only upon some particular occasions.

Q. What is the original of the Te Deum?

A. The most ancient opinions, and that which has been the most universally received, is, that it was the joint production of St. Ambrose and St. Augustine, at the baptism of the latter;* since which time, more than fourteen hundred years, it has ever been held in the highest estimation, and daily repeated in the church. The hymn itself is rational and majestic, and in all particulars worthy of the spouse of Christ; being, above all the compositions of men uninspired, fittest for the tongues of men and angels. In it we recognize the sublimest passages of the prophet Isaiah, and the grandest truths of the gospel history, intermixed with the most pathetic supplications that are to be found in the Book of Psalms.

Q. But is it not to be lamented that many persons are exceeding careless in the use of it?

A. Yes; for they repeat it with as little attention and zeal, as if they did not regard what they said, or to whom the words are addressed. Would to God they would seriously reflect upon, and thoroughly amend this grievous fault! It is impossible for them to utter any thing which is more truly pious and heavenly than this hymn, the expressions of which are remarkably sublime and affectionate; and they ought not to be cold and negligent in repeating it, but their souls should be warmed with

* St. Greg, lib. iii. Dial. cap. iv. mentions Dacius, Bishop of Milan, A. D. 560, who, in the first book of the Chronicles written by him, gives an account of this. See also St. Bennet, Reg. cap. ii.

correspondent sentiments. They should remember, that the use of this hymn requires the utmost fervour of spirit; and, consequently, though the several portions thereof are alternately pronounced by the minister and people, so that the people join vocally in each other portion only, yet they ought to raise their souls to heaven, and fix them steadfastly upon the divine Majesty. They ought mentally to speak those versicles which they do not pronounce with their lips, and make the whole hymn one continued act of ardent and intense devotion.

Q. How should the minister begin the Te Deum?*

A. Not too hastily. After he has said, according to the rubric, "Here ends the first lesson," he ought to make a small pause, that the people may have time to rise from their seats, and compose themselves for the recitation of this solemn hymn; that they may not be hurried and disordered, but leisurely attend the minister's beginning it, and be ready themselves to begin it with him. The same method should be observed before the beginning of any other hymn or psalm, at either morning or evening prayer.

Q. What is the antiquity of the Benedicite?

A. It was an ancient hymn in the Jewish church, and adopted into the public devotions of Christians from the most early times. St. Cyprian quotes it as a part of the holy scripture; in which opinion he is seconded by Ruffinus, who very severely inveighs against St. Jerome for doubting of its divine authority, and informs us that it was used in the church long before his time, who himself lived A. D. 390. And when afterwards it was left out by some who performed divine service, the fourth council of Toledo, in the year 633, commanded it

* In this hymn there is a word which is sometimes erroneously pronounced, and which I shall take the liberty to point out; namely, *Sabbaoth*, which signifies *armies*, but is often read *Sabbath*, which means *rest*.

to be used, and excommunicated the priests who omitted it, alleging as a reason, that it was sung all over the world. St. Chrysostom had before made the same observation, describing this as a hymn every where sung throughout the world, and which would continue to be sung by latest posterity.

Q. Does our church receive this hymn for either an inspired composition, or canonical scripture?

A. No; because it is not to be found in the Hebrew, nor was it allowed in the Jewish canon; notwithstanding it is a very pious, as well as ancient form of praise, and well adapted to the purposes of devotion, being an exact paraphrase of the 148th psalm, and so like it in words and sense, that whoever despiseth this, despiseth that part of the canonical writings.

Q. What is the subject of it?

A. It is an elegant and pathetic address to all God's works to praise him; intimating, that all nature displays the glory of the Creator in his wonderful productions, and inviting us, who have the benefit of them, to join in one general chorus of praising and magnifying the Lord for ever.

Q. When is this hymn proper to be used?

A. When we would glorify God for his works, which is one principal end of the Lord's day; or when the lesson (as on Trinity Sunday) treats of the creation, or the wonderful works of God in any of his creatures, or the use he makes of them, either ordinary or miraculous, for the good of the church.

Q. What is the first hymn after the first lesson at evening called?

A. Cantate Domino, because, in the Latin translation, it begins with these words; and is taken from the 98th psalm; which, though probably composed in consequence of some victory obtained by David, is a form of praise and thanksgiving perfectly suitable to a Christian assembly, who are the spiritual Israel, and the adopted children of God, and therefore have the greatest reason to bless him for the

same, and to call upon the whole creation to unite with us in thanksgiving.

Q. When is this hymn proper to be used?

A. When the lesson treats of any extraordinary instance of divine protection and mercy granted to the peculiar people of God; or when it sets before us the glorious victory atchieved by our blessed Saviour, in triumphing over the powers of death, hell, and the grave; and especially through the whole season of Easter.

Q. What is the second hymn after the first lesson at evening called?

A. Bonum est confiteri, because it begins with those words in the Latin version; being a part of the 92d psalm, particularly designed for the Sabbath-day, with a view to excite the Israelites to praise God, when they meditated upon his wonderful works, not only of creation, but of providence, in the government of the world.

Q. When is this hymn properly used?

A. Every Lord's day, which is the suitable season to give thanks unto the Lord, for all the benefits we have received of him, both spiritual and temporal.

XII. *Of the Hymns after the second Lesson.*

Q. What follow after the second lesson.

A. At morning prayer, the 100th psalm, or a hymn from the first chapter of St. Luke's gospel; and at evening, the 68th psalm, except on the 12th day of the month; or else the 103d psalm.

Q. Why are these hymns placed here?

A. Because, having expressed our thankfulness to God, in one of the hymns which follow the first lesson, for the light and instruction we have received from it, it is no less reasonable and proper that we should show our gratitude to him in other hymns, for the clearer revelations of his divine will and goodness exhibited in the second lesson.

Q. What is the first hymn after the second lesson in the morning called?

A. Jubilate Deo, from its initial words in the Latin version, which we translate into English, *O be joyful in the Lord.* The Hebrew title is, *A song of praise.* This hymn is taken from the 100th psalm, and is said to have been composed by David, upon occasion of public thanksgiving, and was sung by the Jewish church at the oblation of the peace-offering, as the priest was entering the temple, in which all lands and nations are invited and called upon to "serve the Lord with gladness, and come before his presence with a song," for his exceeding grace, mercy, and truth, which are so eminently displayed in the gospel.

Q. What is the second hymn called?

A. Benedictus, because, in the Latin version of it in the New Testament, it begins with that word. In English terms we would call it the hymn beginning, *Blessed be the Lord.* This hymn is taken from the first chapter of St. Luke's gospel, and was sung by Zacharias upon the occasion of the birth and circumcision of his son, John the Baptist. It breathes the warmest language of gratitude and praise to God, for the redemption of the world by our blessed Saviour, of whom John was the forerunner. It is, therefore, very properly placed after the second lesson, because it relates to those blessings of the gospel state which are so copiously set forth in the writings of the New Testament; part of which is always appointed for the second lesson.

Q. When is it proper to use this hymn?

A. When the lesson contains an historical account of the great work of our redemption; for as the angel who first published the glad tidings of salvation was joined by a multitude of the heavenly host, who all sang praises to God; so when the same tidings are rehearsed by the priest, both he and the people immediately join in their mutual

gratulations, praising God, and saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, &c.

Q. What is the first hymn after the second lesson at evening called?

A. Deus Misereatur, because, in the Latin version, it begins with these words. It is taken from the 67th psalm; and, being a prayer for the coming of the gospel, is a proper form wherein to express our desires for the farther propagation of it; and, therefore, must not barely be repeated, but addressed to our Maker in the most solemn manner.

Q. What is the second hymn called?

A. Benedic, Anima mea, because it begins with those words in the Latin version. This hymn is selected from the 103d psalm, and is admirably calculated to express the most ardent love, and devout affections of our souls, for all the inestimable benefits we have received from the bounty of God, both spiritual and temporal.

XIII. *Of the Creeds.*

Q. What follows the hymns after the second lesson, at daily morning and evening prayers?

A. The Apostles', or Nicene creed, which are a summary of articles of faith, expressing concisely and comprehensively the doctrines held to be essentially necessary to salvation; and which are to be said by the minister and the people standing.

Q. Why are the creeds appointed to be said by the minister and people?

A. Because they are the profession of every person present, and ought, for that reason, to be personally pronounced by every one of them, the more expressly to declare their belief of the same to each other, and consequently to the whole Christian world, with whom they maintain communion. And accordingly it should be remembered, that our creeds do not, like our prayers, run in the plural

number. The minister does not say in the name of the congregation, *We believe;* but he for himself, and every individual for himself, is directed to say, *I believe*, &c.

Q. But if the people hear the minister repeat the creeds, and themselves say Amen, *is not this sufficient?*

A. No; for every member of the congregation is as much concerned in the rehearsal of them as the minister himself. It is true, we may, and in holy scripture we are often admonished to pray for one another; but in matters of faith, every man must believe for himself, and ought to make the profession of his belief with his own mouth, since every one is to be justified, and saved by his own faith, and not by the faith of others.

Q. Why are the creeds to be repeated standing?

A. For the following reasons: First, because this was the attitude in which the catechumens in the ancient church always repeated them. Secondly, because they are not so immediately addressed to God as our prayers are. Thirdly, because they are a solemn declaration reciprocally made by one man to another, by every individual to the whole congregation. Now, whenever one man addresses an assembly of his equals, and in the house of prayer all men must be considered as equal, standing is the attitude which among us decorum naturally suggests. Fourthly, because this attitude implies a determination to defend and maintain the faith which we profess. And upon this principle is to be explained the ancient practice of the churches of Lithuania, Poland, &c. where the nobility repeated the creeds standing, and with their swords drawn, intimating that they would, to the utmost, defend the doctrines of the creeds, and were prepared, if necessity should require, to seal the truth of them with their blood.*

*. See Durell's View, &c. sect. i. § xxiv. p. 37.

Q. But is the bare standing at the recital of the creeds of any use?

A. No; unless our minds are attentive, and we regard what we say when we repeat them. We are to consider, therefore, that we are engaged in a most serious concern. We are owning that faith by which we hope for salvation; and, certainly, this ought to be done with the understanding, with unfeigned devotion, and the most sincere resolution to persevere therein to the end of our days: so that those persons are greatly to blame, who either through sloth do not repeat the creeds at all, or through negligence repeat them after such a manner as too plainly indicates that they are not affected thereby, or concerned about what they are doing.

Q. Why are the creeds placed here?

A. The place of them in our liturgy may be considered with respect both to what precede and what follow them.

Q. What precede the creeds?

A. The lessons taken out of the holy scriptures; for "faith cometh by hearing," Rom. x. 17, and we having heard the word of God, profess our belief of it, thereby setting our seal, as it were, to the truth of those divine records, John iii. 33, especially to such articles as the chapters now read to us have confirmed.

Q. What follow the creeds?

A. The prayers which are grounded upon them; for we cannot call upon him in whom we have not believed, Rom. x. 14.* "Faith is the fountain of prayer," says St. Austin. And, therefore, since we are to pray to God the Father, in the name of the Son, by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, for re-

* The Apostles' manner of speaking in this passage, is by way of interrogation, which is equivalent to a negation; implying that it is impossible to do it—it would be wicked and impious to do it. None must be the object of our prayers, but he who is the object of our faith and trust; therefore he must be prayed to.

mission of sins, and a joyful resurrection, we first declare that we believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and that there is remission here, and a resurrection hereafter, for all true members of the Christian church: and then we may be said to pray in faith.

Q. What is necessary to be done that the congregation may repeat the creeds as they ought?

A. Frequently to consider the great importance of them; and the minister ought also to take care that he does not begin them too hastily; for the people must not be hurried, but allowed so much leisure as will enable them to begin all at once, and go through the whole form with a decent deliberation.

Q. Why are the creeds so called?

A. Because they contain those doctrines, which, as Christians, we profess to believe. *Creed* is a term derived from *Credo*, which is the first word that occurs in these professions of faith in the Latin language.

Q. Why is the first called the Apostles' creed?

A. Partly because it consists of the doctrines they taught, and partly because it was composed in or near the time in which they lived.

Q. How is it evident that this creed was composed in or near the time of the Apostles?

A. From the testimonies of the most ancient writers;* particularly of St. Ignatius, in whose epistles most of its articles are to be found; though there are reasons to believe that some few of them, viz. that of the descent into hell, the communion of saints, and the life everlasting, were not added till sometime after, in opposition to some gross errors and heresies, which sprang up in the church. But the whole form, as it now stands in our liturgy, is to be found in the works of St. Ambrose and

* Vid. Irenœum, contr. Næres. b. i cap. ii. p. 45. Tertull. de Virg. veland. cap. i. p. 175. De Præscript. Hæretic. cap. xiii. p. 206.

Ruffinus,* who flourished within four hundred years of Christ.

Q. Why is the other called the Nicene creed?

A. Because the greatest part of it was drawn up by the first general council held at Nice, in Bithynia, in the year 325, consisting of Christians from all parts of the world; it was, however, enlarged by a fuller explication of some articles by the second general council, (held at Constantinople A. D. 381) especially in relation to the divinity and procession of the Holy Ghost, with a view to a more particular confutation and suppression of the Arian and Macedonian heresy.

Q. Why is it customary, at the name of Jesus, for the whole congregation to make obeisance?

A. To testify, by this outward gesture, our inward humility, Christian resolution, and due acknowledgment, that the Lord Jesus Christ, the true eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour of the world, in whom alone all the mercies, graces, and promises of God to mankind, for this life and the life to come, are fully and wholly comprised.

Q. What scripture have we to justify this practice of the church?

A. That passage of St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Philippians, chap. ii. 10, where it is said, "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow."

Q. What provision hath the general convention made with respect to the use of the article, "he descended into hell?"

A. That any churches may omit the words, "he descended into hell;" or may, instead of them, use the words, "he went into the place of departed spirits," which are considered as words equivalent to those in the Apostles' creed. The opinion of eminent divines is, that by *hell*, or *hades*, is meant the place of departed spirits, where the human soul of Christ rested after his death till his resurrection.

* See their expositions of the creed.

Q. Can there be any reasonable objection to repeating the words, "he descended into hell?"

A. No; for it is certain that while the body of our Lord, after his death, rested in the sepulchre, his soul must have rested somewhere. It could not have been in heaven, for there he did not ascend till after his resurrection. Where it was, he himself determines, when he assures the penitent thief, "This day thou shalt be with me in PARADISE." Our Saviour then went into Paradise, into the place or common receptacle of *departed spirits*, where they are in *safe keeping*. This place is styled ᾅδης, translated *hell*, and was never understood by the ancient Fathers to signify the place of sufferings peculiar to the wicked in another world; while the *hell of torments* is styled γέεννα, the place of the damned, which is so often mentioned by St. John in the Revelations, under the title of the *bottomless pit*. There can be no reasonable objection therefore to repeating the words, "he descended into hell," particularly as in so doing we show our respect for the faith and usages of the church, and prevent the minds of Christians from being unsettled, in consequence of some part of the creed being omitted.*

XIV. *Of the Versicles after the Creeds.*

Q. What follow after the creeds?

A. Several versicles which are designed as a solemn preparation and gradation from the confession of our Christian faith, to the remaining part of divine worship, namely, supplication and prayer.

Q. How do these versicles begin?

A. The minister begins with an affectionate wish,

* The proper place to announce the requests of those who desire either *the prayers of the congregation*, or *to return praise*, is immediately after the rehearsal of the creed, while the minister and people are yet standing, and before they proceed to repeat the subsequent versicles.

that God would be graciously present with the congregation, in the offering up to him the sacrifice of those prayers which the church has appointed now to be said, by pronouncing with an audible voice, "The Lord be with you;" which ought not to be done till there is a perfect silence among the people.

Q. Whence is this salutation of the minister taken?

A. It is taken from Ruth ii. 4, where Boaz says to the reapers, "The Lord be with you;" or from St. Paul, who uses the expression to his disciples, The Lord be with you all, 2 Thess. iii. 16. See also Luke i. 28.

Q. Why does the minister bless the people?

A. Because they are not able to ask for those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul, without God's assistance; which benediction, it must be observed, is a very proper salutation in this place, viz. after a public and solemn profession of their faith. For St. John forbids us to say to a heretic, *God speed*, 2 John x. 11; and the primitive Christians were never allowed to salute any that were excommunicated.* But when the minister has heard the whole congregation rehearse the creed, and seen, by their standing up at it, a testimony of their assent to it, he can now salute them as brethren and sound members of the church.

Q. In what manner do the people answer the minister?

A. By praying in return, that the same Lord may be graciously present with him at all times, and especially in the performance of these holy duties; "And with thy spirit." Gal. vi. 18. 2 Tim. iv. 22. Ruth ii. 4. 2 Thess. iii. 16.

Q. What is meant by a man's spirit?

A. By a man's spirit, in scripture phrase, is frequently meant the man himself. So that the people do in reality answer thus: "May God be with thee,

* Capital Carol. Mag. lib. v. chap. 42.

as thou desirest he may be with us, in the oblation of our joint prayers." And in this sense the word spirit is used in that very place whence this form is borrowed, viz. 2 Tim. iv. 22, where the Apostle says, "The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

Q. Why do the people answer the minister in this manner?

A. Because he is their representative with God; and therefore they pray, as St. Paul has enjoined on them, that he also may receive assistance from the Lord to help his infirmities.

Q. How ancient is the use of these versicles?

A. They have been of very early use in the Christian church, especially in the eastern part of it; to which, as an ancient council says, they were delivered by the Apostles themselves: and it is observable, that they always denote, as here, a transition from one part of divine service to another.

Q. Why is the minister directed to say—Let us pray?

A. To remind the people that they are now solemnly entering upon the grand duty of supplication and prayer; to warn them to lay aside all wandering thoughts, and seriously to attend to the great work they are about to perform, and be actually ready to begin their devotion together with him; for though he speaks most of the words, yet our affections must go along with every petition, and seal them all at last with a hearty *Amen*. In the heathen sacrifices there was always one to cry, *Hoc agite*, or to bid them mind what they were about. And in all the old Christian liturgies the deacon used to call often upon the people, "Let us pray earnestly;" and then again, "more earnestly."

Q. To whom are these words, "The Lord be with you," to which the people reply, "And with thy spirit," directed?

A. Not to Almighty God, but only to men, viz. by the minister and people to each other; and there-

fore care should be taken that a difference be made in the tone of the voice between these short forms of mutual compellation, or reciprocal address, and the prayers themselves.

Q. In what posture are they to be pronounced?

A. In a standing posture; and the people should have time to kneel, that there may not be the least noise, and that every person may be perfectly composed and ready to join, when the minister begins the prayers.

Q. What is the antiquity of these versicles?

A. They are said to have been used by the Apostles in their public worship, and are found in the western liturgy ascribed to St. Peter, and in most of the ancient liturgies of the east.

Q. How is the minister directed to proceed next?

A. After this brief admonition, "Let us pray," he is to address himself to God in these words, "O Lord, show thy mercy upon us;" and the people are to answer, "And grant us thy salvation;" because he alone is able to preserve us from misery both here and hereafter.

Q. Whence are these versicles taken?

A. From psalm lxxxv. 7. They being a general petition for mercy and salvation, seem to be the sum of all the weekly collects; for one or both of these are commonly the subject of them.

Q. Why is the minister then directed to say, "O God make clean our hearts within us;" and the people to answer, "And take not thy Holy Spirit from us?"

A. Because, since we are now proceeding to our supplications, we ought to pray God to purify our hearts by his grace from all sin, that no evil thought may remain in us while we approach him, to hinder the efficacy of our prayers, or to obstruct his blessing; but as he has begun to assist and cleanse them, so he would be pleased to continue his help, and the necessary aids of his Holy Spirit, that it may rest upon us in the remaining part of our devotions, and for ever.

XV. *Of the Collects for the Day.*

Q. What follow the versicles after the creeds?

A. The collects for the day, except in the morning prayer, when the communion service is read, and then they may be omitted; but in the evening prayer they are always to be used.

Q. Why are they called collects for the day?

A. Because they are generally *collected* out of the epistle and gospel, and because they are a very brief summary of all things necessary for soul and body, for time and eternity.

Q. What is the antiquity of them?

A. They are, most of them, twelve hundred years old, and some of them are much older, and have been used in the western church ever since the time of St. Gregory the great.

Q. By whom are the collects, and the following prayers to be said?

A. They are to be vocally pronounced by the minister only, though the people are, in duty, obliged to join mentally therein. Wherefore none of the congregation should disturb the rest, especially those who are near them, by repeating their prayers in an audible manner, contrary to the design and rule of the church, which always tells the people when their voices are allowed to be heard, and, consequently, commands them at all other times to be silent, and speak to God in a mental manner only.

XVI. *Of the Collects for Peace.*

Q. What follow after the collects for the day?

A. The collects wherein we pray for *peace;* which, both for the morning and evening service, are translated with little variation from prayers in the sacramentary of St. Gregory; each of them being adapted to the office it is assigned to.

Q. What do we pray for in the collect we use in the beginning of the day?

A. For external peace and security against those troubles, injuries, affronts, and wicked designs of men, to which our intercourse with the world may expose us; because we are then going to engage ourselves in the various affairs and concerns of it.

Q. What do we ask for in that for the evening?

A. For internal peace, that peace which the world cannot give, to comfort and compose us, as springing only from the testimony of a good conscience; that so we may spend our lives in all godly quietness and tranquillity, and that each of us may also with David be enabled to say, as oft as we retire to our beds, "I will lay me down in peace, and take my rest."

Q. How often did the Greek and Latin churches pray for peace?

A. The Greek church daily prayed thrice for peace, and the Latin twice, as we now do, in these ancient and comprehensive forms.

XVII. *Of the Collect for Grace, and aid against Perils.*

Q. What follows after the collects for peace?

A. In the morning service a collect, wherein we pray for grace; and in the evening service a collect for aid against perils.

Q. Whence are these collects taken?

A. They are both formed out of the Greek Eucho-logian (Ευχωλογιαν). That in the morning service for grace, is very proper to be used in the beginning of the day, when we are probably going to be exposed to various dangers and temptations. Nor is the other, for aid against perils, less seasonable at night; for being then in danger of the terrors of darkness, we by this form commend ourselves into the protection of that God, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, and with whom, darkness and light are both alike.

XVIII. *Of the Prayer for the President of the United States, and all in Civil Authority.*

Q. What follows after the collect for grace and aid against perils?

A. A prayer for the President of the United States, and all in civil authority.

Q. Why does this prayer stand next?

A. Because St. Paul has commanded us to pray for all men, 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2, 3; and having hitherto only been praying for ourselves, we now proceed, in obedience to that command, to pray for the whole world; and in the first place for our own rulers, civil and religious.

Q. Why is it a duty to pray for our civil rulers?

A. Because the supreme Ruler of the world, by whom all mortal governors bear rule, is God; his authority has set them up, and his power only can defend them: and it is therefore the duty of all men to pray for those who are his vicegerents.

Q. By whom has this duty been performed?

A. By all mankind, as it were by common consent; for the Heathens offered sacrifices, prayers, and vows for their welfare; and the Jews, as we may see by the psalms, (Psalms xx. and lxxii.) always made their prayers for the king a part of their public service. And all the ancient fathers, liturgies, and councils fully evidence that the same was done daily; and this not only for those who encouraged them, but even for such as opposed them, and were enemies to the faith, and persecutors of its professors. Afterwards, indeed, when the rulers of the world embraced Christianity, they were particularly mentioned by name in the public prayers, with titles expressing the dearest affection, and most honourable respect; and prayed for them in as loyal and hearty terms, as are included in the prayer we are now noticing; which is taken almost word for word out of the sacramentary of St. Gregory.

XIX. *Of the Prayer for the Clergy and People.*

Q. What follows the prayer for the President, &c.

A. A prayer for the clergy and people, both in the morning and evening service; except on those days viz. Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, when the litany is read; and then this and the other prayers following are to be omitted in the morning prayer.

Q. Why is this prayer placed next?

A. Because, having made our supplications for our temporal governors, that under them we may have all those outward blessings which will make our lives comfortable here, it is proper, in the next place, to pray for our spiritual guides, that, with them, we may receive all those graces and inward blessings which will make our souls happy hereafter. We are members of the church as well as of the state; and therefore we must pray for the prosperity of both, since in the peace and prosperity of the one, is, in some measure, involved the quiet and well-being of the other.—The model from which this prayer was taken is found in Gregory's sacramentary.

XX. *Of the Prayer for all conditions of Men.*

Q. What follows after the prayer for the clergy and people?

A. A prayer for all conditions of men, drawn up to supply the want of the litany upon ordinary days, and at evening service. For if we have any real benevolence for our fellow creatures, we shall be naturally led to think it our duty to present the common Father of *all*, our good wishes for them; that they may be favoured with every blessing which may tend to promote universal happiness, spiritual and temporal.

Q. By whom was this prayer originally indited?

A. It was generally ascribed to Bishop Sanderson; but Dr. Biss informs us, that it was a tradition at St. John's, in Cambridge, that Bishop Gunning, who was for some time Master there, was the author; and others say, that it was originally much longer than it is now, and that the leaving out a great part of it, which consisted of petitions for those who are prayed for in the collects, was the occasion why the word *finally* comes in so soon in so short a *prayer*.

XXI. *Of the General Thanksgiving.*

Q. *What follows after the prayer for all conditions of men?*

A. A general thanksgiving; indited, as it is said, by Bishop Sanderson, and so admirably composed, that it is fit to be used by all men who would give God thanks for common blessings.

Q. *Why is this thanksgiving appointed to be said here?*

A. Because praise is one of the most essential parts of God's worship, by which, not only all the Christian world, but the Jews and Gentiles also, paid their homage to the divine Majesty, as might be shown by innumerable testimonies: and, indeed, considering how many blessings we daily receive from God, and that he expects nothing else from us in return for all his benefits, but the easy tribute of love and gratitude, a duty that no one can want leisure or ability to perform—it is certain that no excuse can be made for the omission of it. It is pleasant in the performance, and profitable in the event; for it engages our great Benefactor to continue the mercies we already enjoy; and inclines him to give, and fits us to receive more.

XXII. *Of the Prayer of St. Chrysostom.*

Q. What follows after the thanksgiving?

A. A prayer of St. Chrysostom, so called because it is almost literally taken out of a Greek liturgy, commonly ascribed to him; for where ancient offices afforded proper forms of prayer suited to their circumstances, the venerable compilers of our liturgy, who were not influenced by that vain affectation of novelty, by which some modern reformers seem to have been actuated, rather chose to retain them, than make new ones: and therefore as some are taken from the western offices, so is this from the eastern, where it is daily used.

Q. Why is this prayer inserted at the conclusion of our liturgy?

A. Because it is fit, that, in the close of our prayers, we should first reflect on all those great and necessary requests we have made; and then not only renew our desires that God may grant them, but also stir up our hearts to hope and believe he will do so.

Q. Why do we address ourselves in this prayer, to the second person in the glorious Trinity, our blessed Saviour?

A. Because of the gracious promise he made to us when on earth, that "where two or three are gathered together in his name, he would be there in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20; and, therefore, if we can but prevail with him to hear our desires and petitions, we know that the power of his intercession with his heavenly Father is so great, that we need not doubt, but we shall obtain their several objects.

Q. What may we observe of the manner of expression in this prayer?

A. That since it may happen, that we have asked some things which he may not think convenient for us, we do not peremptorily desire that he would

give us all that we have prayed for, but submit our prayers to his heavenly will, and only request, that "he would fulfil our desires and petitions, as may be most expedient for us;" begging nothing positively, but what we are sure we cannot be too importunate for, viz. the knowledge of all necessary religious truth in this world; and, when we pass out of this world into the world to come, life everlasting: Being fully assured, that if these two points, the knowledge of God here, and the enjoyment of him hereafter, be secured, every thing else is comparatively of little value. And this knowledge, and this happiness, we may positively and importunately ask, without any apprehension of appearing arrogant or presumptuous.

XXIII. *Of the Benedictory Prayer.*

Q. How does the minister close the morning and evening prayer?

A. The whole service being thus finished, he closes it with that benedictory prayer of St. Paul, 2 Cor. xiii. 14, with which he concludes most of his epistles: a form of blessing, which the Holy Spirit seems, by the repeated use of it, to have delivered to the church, to be used instead of that old Jewish form, with which the priest under the law dismissed the congregation. Numb. vi. 23, &c.

Q. For what reason was this change made?

A. It was undoubtedly owing to the new revelation of the three persons in the Godhead. For in other respects the Jews both worshipped and blessed, in the name of the same God, as the Christians; only their devotions had respect chiefly to the unity of the Godhead, whereas our devotions comprehend also the Trinity of Persons.

Q. How does it appear, that the form here used, is a prayer rather than a blessing.

A. Because there is no alteration either of person or posture prescribed to the minister, but he is directed to pronounce it kneeling, and to include himself as well as the people.

Bishop Sanderson's Opinion of the Collects.

"The collects are the most passionate, proper, and elegant expressions that any language ever afforded; and there is in them such piety, and that so interwoven with instructions, that they teach us to know the power, the wisdom, the majesty, and mercy of God, and much of our duty both to him and our neighbour; and a congregation behaving themselves reverently, and putting up to God these joint and known desires for pardon for sins, and praises for mercies received, cannot but be more pleasing to God, than those raw unpremeditated expressions, to which many of the hearers cannot say *Amen*."

A Prayer after Divine Service is ended.

Blessed be thy name, O Lord, for this opportunity of attending thee in thy house and service. Pardon, I beseech thee, my wanderings and imperfections. Mercifully accept my services, and grant that I, and all Christians, may be doers of thy word, and not hearers only, through our only Mediator, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Note. The reason why the prayers are in short collects, is, that there should be frequent mention made of the merits of Jesus Christ, which we must bear in our minds throughout all our addresses to the Divine Majesty.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Litany.

1 TIMOTHY ii. 1.

I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men.

I. *Of the Litany in general.*

Q. WHAT *does the word litany signify?*

A. A general form of supplication to be used by the minister and people. The word litany was used by the most ancient Heathen authors, for "an earnest supplication to the gods in adverse fortune;" and in the same sense it was used by the primitive Christians, viz. for "a supplication and common intercession to God, when his wrath lay heavy upon them." Such a kind of supplication was the 51st psalm, which may be called David's litany. Such was that litany of God's own appointing, Joel ii. 17, when, in a general assembly, the priests were "to weep between the porch and the altar, and to say, 'Spare thy people, O Lord." And such was that litany of our Saviour, Luke xxii. 44, which he thrice repeated "with strong cryings and tears." St. Paul enjoins the daily use of supplications, which are generally understood to be litanies for the removal of some great evil.

Q. What is the antiquity of litanies in their present form?

A. As to their present form, viz. in short petitions by the priests with responses by the people, St. Chrysostom* derives the custom from the primitive ages, when the priest began, and uttered, by the Spirit, some things fit to be prayed for, and the

* In Rom. viii. 26. Hom. 14.

people joined the intercession, saying, "We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord." Tertullian tells us, that by prayers in this form, which they used on the days of their stations or humiliations, they removed drought: And in St. Cyprian's time they frequently supplicated God after this manner, for removing or mitigating his judgments. St. Ambrose has left a form of litany, which bears his name, agreeing in many things with that of our own church. For when miraculous gifts began to cease, they wrote down several of those forms, which were the original of our modern office.

Q. When were litanies first used in procession?

A. About the year 400,* the people walking barefoot, and repeating them with great devotion;† by which means, it is pretended, several countries were delivered from great calamities. About the year 600, Gregory the Great, out of all the litanies then extant, composed the famous *seven-fold litany*,‡ by which Rome, it is said, was delivered from a grievous mortality.‖ This has been a pattern to all the western churches since; to which our litany comes nearer than that in the present Roman Missal, wherein later popes have inserted the invocation of saints, which our compilers have justly rejected.

Q. Were litanies in use before processions?

A. Yes; and remained when they were discontinued; for those processional litanies having occasioned much scandal, it was decreed, "that the li-

* Mamercus, Bishop of Vienna, is said to have been the first who instituted processional litanies and supplications.

† Niceph. Hist. c. 14. c. 3.

‡ It was called Litania Septiformis, or the seven-fold litany, because he ordered the church to make their procession in seven classes; namely, first the clergy, then laymen, next the monks, after them the virgins, then the married women, next the widows, last of all the poor and the children. Vide Greg. lib. xi. Epis. 2. and Strabo de offic. Eccles. c. 28.

‖ Paul, Diac. lib. 18, and Balœus in vit. Greg.

tany should, for the future, only be used within the walls of the church;"* and so it is used by us.

Q. When is the litany appointed to be said?

A. On Wednesdays and Fridays,† the fasting-days of the primitive church; and especially on Sundays, as being the days of the greatest assembly for divine service. Formerly the litany was a distinct office by itself, and used some time after the common prayer was over. At present it is made one office with the morning service, being ordered to be read after the fourth collect or prayer, viz. for the President, &c. instead of the intercessional prayers in the daily service.

II. *Of the Invocation.*

Q. How is the litany introduced?

A. With a solemn invocation of the blessed and glorious Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Q. Why does the litany begin with this solemn invocation?

A. Because we have a divine command to call upon God, James v. 13; and all the litanies now extant begin with this solemn word, "*Lord* have mercy upon us." So that this invocation is the sum and substance of the whole litany, being a particular address for mercy, first to each person in the Holy Trinity individually, and then to them all unitedly. The address being urged by two motives, viz. first, because we are miserable; and, secondly, because we are sinners, upon which accounts we extremely need mercy.

Q. Why is the invocation to be repeated by the whole congregation?

* Concil. Coloniens.

† These days were observed as days of fasting by the primitive Christians, in memory of Christ's being betrayed on the one, and crucified on the other. The litany is enjoined to be read then, and on Sundays, in order to give more solemnity to the service of those days.

A. The design of it is, that every one may first crave to be heard in his own words; which favour, when they have obtained, they may leave it to the minister to set forth all their needs to Almighty God, provided they show their consent to each petition, by answering at the end of it as directed.

III. *Of the Deprecations.*

Q. What follow next to the invocation?

A. The deprecations; for having prepared the way by the preceding invocation, we now begin to ask; and because deliverance from evil is the first step to felicity, we therefore begin with these deprecations for removing it. And both the eastern and western church begin their litanies after this manner;* which, as well as ours, are a paraphrase upon that petition in the Lord's prayer, "deliver us from evil."

Q. What is the order and method of these deprecations?

A. It is as follows:

1. Because our requests ought to ascend by degrees; before we ask for a deliverance, we beg the mercy of forbearance. For we confess we have sinned with our fathers, Psalm cvi. 6; and that therefore God may justly punish us, not only for our sins, but for theirs also, since we have made them our own by imitation: for which reason we beg of him not to remember, nor take vengeance of us for them, especially since he has so dearly purchased our pardon with his own most precious blood. But, however, if we cannot prevail upon God wholly to spare us, and he may see it good for us to be under some portion of chastisement; then we beg that his correction may be short, and soon removed, and that he would not "be angry with us for ever."

2. The sum of all that we pray against being de-

* Liturg. St. Chrysos. and St. Basil.

liverance from the evils of sin and punishment, we begin the next petition with two general words, which include both: for evil and mischief signify wickedness and misery; and as the first is caused by the crafts and assaults of the devil, so the second is brought upon us by the just wrath of God here, and completed by everlasting damnation hereafter; and therefore we desire to be delivered both from sin and the punishment of it, as well from the causes that lead to it as the consequences that follow it.

3. After we have thus prayed against sin and misery in general, we descend regularly to the particulars, reckoning divers kinds of the most notorious sins; some of which have their seat in the heart or mind, and others in the body: and, first, we advert to those of the heart, where all sin originates; there recounting such as concern both ourselves and our neighbour. Of the former sort are blindness of heart, which we place in front, as the cause of all the rest; and pride, vain-glory, and hypocrisy, which are united together in this deprecation, as vices which generally accompany one another. Of the latter sort are envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness; in which words are comprehended all those sins which we do, or can, commit against our neighbour in our hearts.

4. From the heart sin spreads farther into the life and actions, and thither our litany now pursues it, beginning with that which St. Paul reckons first among the works of the flesh (Gal. v. 19), viz. all inordinate and sinful affections, which words are not to be confined to the bare inclination of defiling another, but comprehend under them all acts of uncleanness whatsoever. And these are they which we pray against in this petition, together with all other sins, whether great or small, that we are apt to fall into through the deceits of our three great spiritual enemies, which we renounced in baptism, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

5. When the cause is removed, there are hopes

the consequences may be prevented; and, therefore, after we have petitioned against all sin, we may reasonably pray against all those judgments with which God generally scourges those who offend him, whether they are such as fall on whole nations and kingdoms, and either come immediately from the hand of God, as lightning and tempest, plague, pestilence, and famine; or, though not immediately, are yet inflicted by the hands of wicked men, such as battle and murder; or whether they are such as fall upon particular persons only, as sudden death, which happens sometimes by violence, from the hand of the assassin, by fire or water, or some other way, in a moment, without any warning or apparent cause: And though both these kinds of death may sometimes happen to very good men, yet if we consider that by such accidents we may leave our relations without comfort, and our affairs unsettled, and may ourselves be deprived of the preparative ordinances for death, and have no time to fit our souls for our great account, prudence, as well as humility, will teach us to pray against them.

6. Having thus deprecated those evils which might endanger our lives, we proceed next to pray against such as would deprive us of our peace and truth; as well those which are levelled at the state, as are "all sedition, privy conspiracy and rebellion;" as those which portend the ruin of the church, as "all false doctrine, heresy, and schism." And then we conclude with the last and worst of God's judgments, which he generally inflicts on those whom neither private nor public calamities will reform, viz. "hardness of heart, and contempt of his word and commandment:" for when people amend not by those punishments which are inflicted on their property and persons, on the church and state, then the patience of God is tired out—he withdraws his grace, and gives them up to a reprobate mind, the usual prelude to destruction and damnation; from which deplorable state, *good Lord deliver us.*

7. And now to be delivered from all these great and grievous evils, is a mercy so very desirable, that it ought to be requested by the most importunate kind of supplication imaginable: and such are the two next petitions, which the Latins called *Obsecrations*, in which the church beseeches our dear Redeemer to deliver us from all the evils which we have been praying against, "*by the* mystery of his holy incarnation," &c. that is, she lays before our Lord all his former mercies to us expressed in his incarnation, nativity, circumcision, baptism, and in every thing else which he has done and suffered for us; and offers these considerations to move him to grant our requests, and to deliver us from those evils.

Lastly. And though we are always either under, or near some evil, for which reason it is never unseasonable to pray for deliverance; yet there are some particular times in which we stand in more especial need of the divine help, and they are either during our lives, or at our deaths. During our lives we particularly want the divine assistance; first "in all times of tribulation," when we are usually tempted to murmuring, impatience, sadness, despair, and the like: and these we pray against now, before the evil day comes, not that God would deliver us *from* all such times, which would be an unlawful request; but that he would support us *under* them whenever he should please to permit them. The other part of our lives in which we pray to be delivered is, "*in all times* of our prosperity," which are rather more dangerous than our times of adversity: all kinds of prosperity, especially plenty and abundance, being exceedingly apt to increase our pride, to inflame our lusts, to multiply our sins, and, in a word, to make us forget God, and grow careless of our souls: and, therefore, we have need to pray, that in all such times God would be pleased to deliver us. But whether we spend our days in prosperity or adversity, they must all end

in death, in the hour of which the devil is always most active, and we least able to resist him. Our pains are grievous, our fears are many, and the danger great of falling into impatience, despair or security; and, therefore, we constantly pray for deliverance in that important trial, which, if God grant us, we have but one request more, and that is, that he would also deliver us "in the day of judgment;" which is the last time a man is capable of deliverance, since, if we are not delivered then, we are left to perish eternally. How fervently therefore ought we to pray for ourselves, as St. Paul prayed for *Onesiphorus*, that "the Lord would grant unto us, that we may find mercy of the Lord in that day."

Q. May not the so frequent use of—Good Lord, deliver us, *be justly charged upon us as a tautology or vain repetition?*

A. No; for if you take notice, it is every time applied to distinct matter, and consequently makes a distinct prayer. So that it is no more a tautology, or vain repetition, than if any man should, as he certainly must, frequently say in any other prayer, such words as these, "Grant, O Lord," &c. "We beseech thee," &c.

What is here said of these words, "Good Lord, deliver us," may easily be applied to the following form, "We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord," which has always a respect to the words going before, and every time it is used makes a distinct prayer.

IV. *Of the Intercessions.*

Q. What follow next to the imprecations?

A. The intercessions; and if the authority of God be required to prove this part of our litany necessary, we have his positive command, by St. Paul, to make intercessions for all men, 1 Tim. ii. 1; and if the consent of the universal church can add any

thing to its importance, it is evident that this kind of prayer is in all ancient liturgies, and that every one of the petitions we are now going to treat of, are taken from the best and oldest litanies extant.

Q. What is the method and order of these intercessions?

A. It is so admirably perfect and natural, that all degrees of men follow in their proper order; and at the same time, so comprehensive, that we can think of no sorts of persons who are not enumerated, and for whom all those things are asked, which all and every one of them stand in need of.

But, 1st, because it may seem presumptuous for us to pray for others, who are unworthy to pray for ourselves; before we begin to intercede for them, we acknowledge we are sinners; but yet, if we are penitent, we know that our prayers will be acceptable to God, which he requires us to offer up for others as well as for ourselves; and, therefore, in humble confidence of his mercy, and in obedience to his command, "we sinners do beseech him to hear us," in these our intercessions, which we offer up, first for the holy church universal, the common mother of all Christians, as thinking ourselves more concerned for the good of the whole, than of any particular part of this holy community.

2. And because the peace of the church, under God, chiefly consists in the welfare and due administration of civil government, we therefore proceed next to pray for all Christian rulers and magistrates, according to the example of the primitive Christians, and in obedience to the positive command of St. Paul, who enjoins us to pray for all in authority. 1 Tim. ii. 2.

3. After this we pray for our own church, that branch of the church universal to which we immediately belong. We begin by praying for those members of it, from whose spiritual knowledge and pious examples the increase of true religion is principally to be expected, and which is perfectly agree-

able to the practice of all nations in the world. The Jews and Gentiles ever esteemed their priests to be next in dignity to the civil magistrates, and all ancient liturgies pray for the clergy immediately after the supreme rulers of the state, as being the most considerable members of the Christian church, and distinguished here by those three apostolical orders of bishops, priests and deacons.

4. We next pray for all the other members of the community; for unless they are safe and happy, the governors themselves cannot be prosperous, Prov. xiv. 28; the diseases of the members being a trouble to the head also.

5. But although we may be allowed to pray for our own, and other Christian nations first, yet our prayers must extend to all mankind; and therefore, in the next place we pray for the whole world, in the very words of ancient liturgies, viz. that all nations may have *unity* at home among themselves, *peace* with one another, and *concord*, that is, amity, commerce, and alliances.

6. Having thus prayed for temporal blessings both for ourselves and others, it is time now to consider what is wanting for our souls; and, therefore, we now proceed to pray for spiritual blessings, such as virtue and holiness. And, first, we pray that the principles of them may obtain in our hearts, viz. the *love and fear of God*, and that the influence of those principles may be seen in our lives, by our *diligent living after his commandments.*

7. But though we receive grace, yet if we do not improve it, we shall be in danger of losing it again; and therefore having in the former petition desired that we might become good, we subjoin this petition that we may grow in grace, and also that we may use proper means to obtain it, such as meekly hearing God's word, &c.

8. From praying for the sanctification of those within the pale of the church, we become solicitous for the conversion of those that are without it, de-

sirous that "all should be brought into the way of truth who have erred or are deceived."

9. But although such as are without the pale of the church are the most miserable, and therefore justly entitled to our warmest compassion; yet those within it are not yet so happy and confirmed in virtue as not to require our prayers; some of them standing in need of *strength*, and others of *comfort*: these blessings we therefore now ask for those who want them.

10. Having thus considered the souls of men, we proceed to such things as respect their bodies, and to pray for all the afflicted in general; interceding with God "to succour all who are in danger," by preventing the evil that now threatens them; "to help those who are in actual necessity," by giving them such relief as they need; "and to comfort all who are in tribulation," by supporting them under it, and delivering them out of it.

11. And because the circumstances of some of these interfere with their being present to intercede in the church of God for themselves, we particularly remember them, since they more especially require our prayers; such are "all who travel by land or by water," and the rest enumerated in that petition.

12. There are other afflicted persons who are unable to help themselves, such as fatherless children and widows, who are too often destitute of earthly friends; and such as are destitute of the necessaries and conveniences of life, or are oppressed by the false and cruel dealings of wicked and powerful men: and, therefore, these also we particularly recommend to God, and beg of him to defend and provide for them.

13. After this enumeration of sufferers, as well in spiritual as temporal things, lest any kind or description of persons should be passed unnoticed, who are already under, or in danger of any afflic-

tion, we next pray that God would have mercy upon all men.

14. Then, to show we have no reserve or exception in our charity or devotions, we intercede particularly for our enemies, persecutors, and slanderers;* who we desire may be partakers of all the blessings we have been praying for, and that God would "forgive them, and turn their heats."

15. After we have thus previously prayed for ourselves, and then for others, we proceed to pray for them and ourselves together; requesting, first, whatever is necessary for the sustenance of our bodies, comprehended under "the fruits of the earth."

16. And then we intercede for all things necessary for our souls, in order to bring them to eternal felicity, viz. "true repentance, forgiveness of all our sins, &c. and amendment of life." Which last petition is very proper for a conclusion. For we know that if we do not amend our lives, all these intercessions will signify nothing, because God will not hear impenitent sinners. We therefore earnestly beg repentance and amendment of life, that so our preceding requests may not fail.

* This we do in obedience to the express command of our blessed Saviour, Matt. v. 44. And this also was agreeable to his own practice as well as precept; for he prayed for his worst enemies, even when they were acting upon him the greatest and most unjust cruelty that ever the sun saw. Luke xxxiii. 34. And so did St. Stephen, in the agonies of death, and under the torture of his enemies, imitate this heroic charity. Acts viii. 60. And all the noble army of martyrs in the midst of their torments, prayed for those who so barbarously inflicted them. Neither was this done by Christians in extraordinary cases only; but it was a part of their daily office, to pray for all their enemies, who endeavoured to injure and persecute them by word or deed; which is evident as well from the most ancient offices, as from innumerable places of the Fathers; which did so attract the attention of the Heathen, as to make them cry out, "Never was there a religion so holy, so ingenuous, and every way so perfect, as this, which made its professors kind to all men, as if they were their nearest kindred, or dearest friends." Euseb. Hist. lib. 9. cap. 8.

17. Having presented so many excellent supplications to the throne of grace, lest it should appear, if we now conclude that we were not much concerned whether they were heard or not, the church has appointed us still to pursue them with vigorous importunities and redoubled intreaties. And for this reason we here call upon our Saviour in particular, whom we have all the while been praying to in the unity of the Divine nature, and beseech him by his own personal divinity, as he is the Son of God, and consequently abundantly able to help us in all these things, that he would hear us: and then we invoke him by his humanity, beseeching him by his sufferings for us, when he became the Lamb of God, and was sacrificed to take away the sins of the world, that he would grant us an interest in that peace and reconciliation he made with God, and the peace of conscience following thereupon; and that he would have mercy upon us, and take away our sins, so as to deliver us from the guilt and punishment of them. And, finally, we beg of him, as he is the Lord Christ, our anointed Mediator, to hear us, and favour us with a gracious answer to all these intercessions.

Lastly, that our conclusion may be suitable to our beginning, we conclude with a solemn address to the glorious Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for that mercy which we have been petitioning in so many particulars; this word comprehending them all, and therefore these sentences being an epitome of the whole litany, and, considering how repeatedly, and how many ways we need mercy, we can never ask it too frequently.

V. *Of the Supplications.*

Q. What follow next to the intercessions?

A. The supplications, which were first collected and digested into their present form, when the barbarous nations began to overrun the Roman empire,

about 600 years after Christ, in the time of St. Gregory the *Great.* But, considering the troubles of the church militant, and the many enemies it always hath to contend with in this world, the latter part of the litany is no less suitable than the former at all times whatever.

Q. How do these supplications begin?

A. With the Lord's prayer, which the ancient Christians annexed to every office, to show both their esteem of that, and their humble opinion of their own compositions, which receive life and value from this divine form.* And here let it be observed, that many devout Christians find that they never recite this blessed prayer with greater fervency than in this place, when their hearts have been warmed with those affectionate and moving petitions of the former parts of the litany; and we ought to strive to do the like, that we may experience the truth of this observation, and supply the defects of our more careless repeating it before. Then it will effectually recommend all our desires to our heavenly Father.

Q. How do we proceed next?

A. To beg deliverance from our troubles: But because our consciences presently suggest, that our

* Nothing seems more strange, than that any religious society, who call themselves Christians, can omit that prayer which is the very badge of Christianity, especially when we consider that this divine form was composed and prescribed by our blessed Lord and Master himself, and was on all occasions used by the primitive church. In those days, the novel and strange objection urged by some against the use of this prayer, that it is a form, was unknown. On the contrary, because it was a form, enjoined by our Redeemer and Mediator, it was always accounted the most spiritual and prevalent prayer that man could address to God. To pray in the words of the Lord's prayer, as the Christian Fathers conceive, is, " to worship God in spirit and in truth." In the devout use of this form they considered themselves, as " praying with the understanding and praying with the spirit also." See Cyprian and Augustine.

iniquities deserve much greater punishment, and that we cannot expect to be wholly delivered since we suffer so justly, we are reminded that "God doth not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities." Psalm ciii. 10. And therefore we turn these very words into supplication, and thereby clear his justice in punishing us, but apply to his mercy to apportion his chastisements according to our ability to bear them, and not according to the desert of our offences.

Q. What follows next?

A. The way being thus prepared, the minister now begins to pray for the people alone; but lest they should think their duty at an end, as soon as the responses are concluded, he enjoins them still to accompany him in their hearts, by that ancient form, *Let us pray;* and then proceeds to the prayer against persecution, which is collected partly out of the scripture, and partly out of the primitive forms, and is still to be found almost entire among the offices of the western church, with the title, *For Tribulation of Heart!*—Here let us remember that it would be downright mockery of Almighty God, should we join in this and the following prayers, with their responding sentences, without that hearty contrition and sincere purpose of amendment, which they are intended to produce in us.

Q. Why is not this prayer concluded with Amen, *as we conclude our other prayers?*

A. To show that the same request is continued in another form; and that what the minister begged before alone, all the people join to ask in the following alternate supplications taken from the psalms. When our enemies are rising to destroy us, we desire that God would *arise and help us*, not for any worthiness in ourselves, but *for his name's sake, that he may make his power to be known.*

Q. What follows?

A. Whilst the people are praying thus earnestly, the minister, to quicken their faith by another di-

vine sentence, commemorates the great troubles, adversities and persecutions from which God hath delivered his church in all ages; and since he is the same Lord, and we have the same occasion, this is considered as the ground of our future hope. Our Bible, and ancient and modern history, as well as the relation our fathers have told us, and the examples we have seen, do all assure us of this, and therefore the people again say, *O Lord arise, help us*, &c. which is no vain repetition, but a testimony that they are convinced they did wisely to ask of this God, who hath done so great things for his people in all ages, now to *arise and help them;* that so the honour he has gotten by the wonders of his mercy may be renewed and confirmed by this recent act of his power and goodness.

Q. Why is the doxology placed here?

A. In imitation of David, who often, in the very midst of his complaints, out of a firm persuasion that God would hear him, suddenly broke out into an act of praise. And we, having the same God to pray to, in the midst of our mournful supplications, not only look back on former blessings with joy and comfort, but forward also on the mercies we now pray for; and though we have not yet received them, we praise him, being persuaded they will be given to us; and doubt not, but that, as he was glorified in the beginning, for past mercies, so he ought to be now for the present, and will be hereafter for future blessings.

Q. Why are the following responses added?

A. Because, though the faithful firmly believe that they shall finally be delivered, and at present rejoice in hopes thereof; yet, since it is probable that their afflictions may be continued for a season for the trial of their patience and the exercise of their other graces, we, therefore, continue to pray for support in the mean time, and beg of Christ *to defend us from our enemies, and to look graciously upon our afflictions; pitifully to behold the sorrows of our*

hearts, and mercifully to forgive our sins, which are the cause of them. And this we know he will do, if our prayers be accepted; and accordingly we beg of him *favourably, with mercy, to hear* them; and entreat him, as he assumed our nature, and became the Son of David, whereby he took on him our infirmities, and became acquainted with our griefs, *to have mercy upon us.* And because the hearing of our prayers in a time of distress is so desirable a mercy, that we cannot ask it too fervently, nor too often, we therefore redouble our cries, and beg of him, as he is Christ, our anointed Lord and Saviour, that he would *vouchsafe to hear us* now, and whenever we cry to him for relief in our troubles. And to show that we rely on his help alone, we conclude these supplications with David's words in a like case, *O Lord, let thy mercy be showed upon us, as we do put our trust in thee.* To him, and to him only, have we applied; and as we have no other hope but in him, so we may expect that this hope will be realized, and that we shall certainly be delivered in his due time.

Q. In what manner do we conclude our supplications?

A. With a prayer for sanctifying our troubles; for the whole congregation having thus addressed the Son, the minister now calls upon us to make our application to the Father (who knows as well what we suffer as what we can bear), in a most fervent form of address, composed originally by St. Gregory, more than twelve hundred years ago.

VI. *Of the general Thanksgiving.*

Q. Why is the general thanksgiving added here?

A. To render the litany, which was formerly a distinct service, complete; and to comply with the exhortation of St. Paul, who directs, that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men."

VII. *Of the Prayer of St. Chrysostom, and 2 Cor. xiii. 14.*

Q. How is the whole litany ended?

A. With the prayer of St. Chrysostom, and that which is taken from 2 Cor. xiii. 14. For the litany being now used almost every where with the morning prayer, these latter collects, being omitted in their usual place, very properly come in here; and how suitable they are may be seen from what has been said of them already.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings.

PHILIPPIANS iv. 6.

—In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known.

I. *Of the occasional Prayers in general.*

Q. WHY *has our church appointed these prayers to be used upon special occasions?*

A. Because there are some evils so universal and grievous, that it is necessary they should be deprecated with a peculiar importunity; and some mercies so exceedingly needful at certain times, that it is not sufficient to include our desires of them among our general requests, but very requisite that we should more solemnly petition for them in forms proper to the several circumstances. This seems to have been the practice of the Jews: for that famous prayer which Solomon made at the dedication of the temple, supposes that special prayers would be made there in time of war, drought, pestilence and famine: And the light of nature taught

the Gentiles on such extraordinary occasions, to make extraordinary addresses to their gods. Nor are Christians to be thought less mindful of their own necessities. The Greek church has full and proper offices for times of drought and famine, of war and tumults, of pestilence and mortality, and upon occasion of earthquakes also, a judgment very frequent among them; but more seldom in this part of the world. In the western missals there is a collect, and an epistle and gospel, with some responses upon every one of these subjects, seldom, indeed, agreeing with any of our forms, which are the shortest of all; they being not designed for a complete office, but appointed to be used before the two final prayers of morning and evening service, every day while the occasion requires it; so that in times of adversity and affliction, the mercy of God may be immediately implored.

II. *Of the Prayer for Congress.*

Q. Why ought we to pray for Congress?

A. Because they have, in the time of their session, such great affairs under deliberation, and such happy opportunities of doing their country service, it is fit they should have our prayers for their success. We learn that the primitive Christians prayed for the Roman senate, and that even the Gentiles offered sacrifices in behalf of their public councils, which were always held in some sacred place.

III. *Of the Prayer for Rain.*

Q. Why is this prayer to be used in time of drought?

A. Because the want of rain is a grievous judgment, and because God alone can give this blessing to us, for it is his gift. And the Rabbins truly observe, "that rain is one of those things wherein the

power and providence of God most eminently appear."

Q. Has this practice, of calling upon God in time of drought, been universal?

A. Yes; for all nations have applied themselves to their respective deities in this case. The Jews called upon the true God. To him Elijah applied himself after a drought of three years: And Jehosaphat inquired for a prophet of the Lord to pray for the armies in their distress. The Athenians called upon Jupiter to rain on their tillage and their pasturage. The Romans had solemn sacrifices and processions to beg rain of their deities: But the Christians, with fasting and mortification, exceeded all others in their devout addresses to God for this mercy.

Q. Has this course alone been found successful?

A. Yes; for thus Elijah obtained rain for Israel, and thus the primitive Christians prevailed with God for the Roman army, almost destroyed by thirst. They also procured rain by their litanies at many other times.

IV. *Of the Prayer for fair Weather.*

Q. Wherein appears the necessity of this prayer?

A. From the miseries that attend an excess of rain, which is very uncomfortable, and very injurious. To have the heavens darkened, and the clouds weeping, the earth covered with floods, and the waters roaring, is a very sad prospect, especially if we consider what losses it occasions to the public and to individuals, by destroying the fruits of the earth, and consequently the food of man and beast. In these circumstances God only can help us, which shows how necessary this prayer is. God is the maker, and only master of this unruly element; on him Moses called to stay the rain; to him Samuel prayed for the ceasing of those terrible showers, 1 Sam. xii. 19; and to him we may, with a reasonable hope, apply ourselves in the like case.

V. *Of the Prayer in the Time of Dearth and Famine.*

Q. Why are we directed to call on God in the time of dearth and famine?

A. Because he makes bread to grow out of the earth, and he can prevent fertility when he pleases. He is said to call for a dearth upon the land, to intimate that famine is one of his servants, which cometh at his pleasure.

Q. What are some of the dreadful effects of this judgment?

A. Egypt experienced a famine of seven years together, though anciently esteemed the most fertile region in the world. Even the fruitful land of Canaan was many times very grievously punished by a scarcity of necessary food: nor has any nation been always free from it. The Roman empire was grievously afflicted with a famine, in which thousands were starved in the reign of the persecuting Maximinus; and in Justinian's time, mothers were constrained to eat their own children. The annals of Europe also tell us, that even the most fruitful kingdoms have frequently been severely punished for their sins, by the want of food. In England, particularly, men have been compelled, through scarcity of food, to eat horse-flesh and the bark of trees; and in the city of London alone, there were two thousand starved to death in one famine. And though we, in this country, have not yet been driven to such severe extremities, yet we know not how soon our sins may provoke God to withdraw his mercies, and make our country, which is the glory of all lands, to become "barren for the wickedness of them that dwell therein."

Q. How may we prevent or remove this evil?

A. By prayer and sincere devotion to God: thus Elijah's prayer brought plenty to Israel, 1 Kings xviii. St. Gregory's litany is said to have put an end to the famine in Italy. And the famous Bul-

linger persuaded the Tigurine church to fast and pray every third day in a time of famine, and thus obtained a deliverance.

VI. *Of the Prayer in Time of War and Tumult.*

Q. Are the rules of christianity inconsistent with war?

A. They are inconsistent with every kind of war, but such as is undertaken for our just and necessary defence; and our church daily prays against wars in her collects and litanies, and all good men heartily wish there were no such thing as war in the world: But, alas! offences will come, and our sins many times cry louder than our prayers, which are designed to prevent this evil, and then the sword of men is made the instrument of God's vengeance.

Q. What does the elegant Arnobius observe?

A. "That if all men would listen to the salutary and peaceable decrees of Jesus, and not arrogantly prefer their own opinions before his admonitions, the whole world, ere this, turning their swords into plough-shares, would have lived in a pleasant tranquillity, and combined together in inviolable leagues of blessed amity."

Q. How are wars and tumults distinguished?

A. If it be a contest with a foreign enemy, it is called war; if the opposers of the country be domestic rebels, it is styled a tumult; but in both it is our duty to assist our country, and by our prayers as well as our endeavours, seek its peace and safety.

Q. What are the causes of war?

A. The true original causes are the evil dispositions of men, the desire of hurting, the cruelty of revenge, the implacableness of malice, the fierceness to rebel, and the thirst of bearing rule; so St. Augustine enumerates the causes of war.

Q. What are the miseries and effects of war?

A. They are so many and so great, that David chose a raging pestilence, rather than endure the

severity of this judgment. It makes houses without inhabitants, and sets villages in flames; by it, stately palaces are demolished and buried in their ruins; fair cities are sacked and rifled; holy temples are prophaned, and consecrated things seized by bloody hands: it causes also to be heard the shrieks of affrighted women, the cries of helpless children, the lamentations of the fatherless and widows, and makes tears to flow from those who are spoiled and undone, while the victorious enemy are merry and unconcerned, and convert the miseries of others to their sport and triumph, and esteem them their advantage and felicity. These, with many other evils, are the sad consequences of war. And besides, a pious man considers the deplorable end of those who are surprized in the midst of their sins, and finds too just cause to fear, that they who live so impiously, and die so suddenly, die at once a double death, when they enter on an awful eternity.

Q. What is the proper method to procure peace?

A. Prayer; because God alone can help us. Multitude of soldiers, and store of ammunition, wealth and policy, conduct and discipline are good; but Solomon has observed, that "the battle is not always to the strong:" God is the *Lord of hosts, and the God of battle.* "He is that man of war," of whom the scripture speaks, "that getteth the victory alone by himself," and whatsoever side he takes doth conquer. Moreover, "he maketh wars to cease in all the world, and it is all one to him to save by many or by few."

Q. Has it been customary among all nations to make their addresses to heaven in time of war?

A. Yes; thus we find Moses prayed while Joshua fought with Amelek; and the victory is ascribed to the devotion of Moses, rather than to Joshua's arms. The examples of Jehosaphat and Hezekiah are recorded for our imitation. Scipio the great went up to the capitol before each of his military expeditions: the Greeks and Romans always of-

fered sacrifice before a battle; and at Rome they were wont to send their general into Mars' temple, to shake the shields that hung there, and to cry, *O Mars, awake!* The Emperor Constantine taught his soldiers a form of prayer to be used in time of war, as Eusebius relates; and St. Gregory advises the Sicilian Bishops to use the litany every Wednesday and Friday, against the incursions of the barbarians; and both eastern and western churches have proper offices in time of war.

VII. *Of the Prayers for those who are to be admitted to Holy Orders.*

Q. When are these prayers to be used?

A. In the weeks preceding the stated times of ordination, which is a matter of so great importance to the Christian church, that it has ever been performed with great solemnity, and extraordinary prayers and fastings.

Q. What was the practice of the Apostles?

A. When they separated persons for the work of the ministry, they always prayed and fasted before they laid their hands on them.

Q. What are the weeks preceding the stated times of ordination called?

A. They are commonly called *Ember-Weeks*, they being certain days set apart for the consecrating to God the four seasons of the year, and for the imploring his blessings upon the ordinations performed in the church at those times.

Q. Why are the ember-weeks so called?

A. From a German word, some think, which imports abstinence; though others are of opinion, that they are so called, because it was customary among the ancients to express their humiliation at those seasons of fasting, by sprinkling embers or ashes upon their heads; and, when they broke their fasts on such days, to eat only cakes baked in embers, which were therefore called ember-

bread. But the most probable conjecture is that of Dr. Mareschal, who derives it from a Saxon word, importing a circuit or course; so that these fasts being not occasional, but returning every year in certain courses, may properly be said to be ember-days, that is, fasts in course.

Q. At what times were the ember-days observed?

A. They were formerly observed, in several churches, with some variety. Some say they were fixed by Calixtus, in the year 221; and others, that they were settled by Gelasius, in the year 495: however, it is certain that the council of Placencia, in the year 1095, determined them to be the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, after Whit-Sunday, after the 14th of September, and the 13th of December.

Q. Why were the ordinations fixed to these particular times?

A. That both bishops and candidates, knowing the times, might prepare themselves for this great work; that no vacancy might remain long unsupplied; and that the people also, knowing the times, might, if they chose, be present, either to approve the choice made by the bishop, or to object against those whom they knew to be unworthy; which primitive privilege is still reserved to the people in our well-constituted church.

A HYMN.

Father of mercies, in thy house
Smile on our homage, and our vows;
While with a grateful heart we share
These pledges of our Saviour's care.

The Saviour, when to heaven he rose
In splendid triumph o'er his foes,
Scatter'd his gifts on men below,
And wide his royal bounties flow.

Hence sprung the *bishop*'s honour'd name,
Sacred beyond heroic fame;
In lower forms to bless our eyes,
Elders from hence and deacons rise.

From Christ their varied gifts derive,
And fed by Christ their graces live;
While guarded by his potent hand,
'Midst all the rage of hell they stand.

So shall the bright succession run
Through the last courses of the sun;
While unborn churches by their care
Shall rise and flourish large and fair.

Jesus our Lord, their hearts shall know,
The spring whence all these blessings flow;
Pastors and *people* shout his praise
Through the long round of endless days.

VIII. *Of the Prayer in Times of great Sickness and Mortality.*

Q. Why ought we to make use of this prayer?

A. Because none but God can help us. Famine sometimes, and war always is inflicted by the hand of men; but this sad calamity is immediately from the hand of God. The very light of nature taught the Gentiles in times of unusual sickness to seek the favour of their gods; and they had several kinds of lustrations and sacrifices on this occasion: the most memorable example whereof is in that pestilence at Athens, which was to be removed by offering sacrifices to a god whose name the oracle had not expressed: whereupon Epimenides being consulted, ordered the Athenians to let the sacrifices loose, and where they should lie down, to kill, and offer them *to the uncertain god;* and so they were delivered by the true and living, though to them, the *unknown God*, to whom it is probable

they afterwards built that altar which St. Paul found at Athens. Acts xvii. 23. As to Christians, it is so well known that they had litanies and forms of prayer, with the solemnities of fastings and processions for the removal of singular instances of sickness and mortality, that it would be superfluous to attempt to prove it.

IX. *Of the Prayer for a sick Person.*

Q. Why is it proper to desire the prayers of the church in time of sickness?

A. Because the prayers of the church are more efficacious with God than those of any private person.

Q. Why should we fly to God in our sickness?

A. Because his nature is full of compassion, and all his dispensations show he is ready to relieve the miserable; and because he has made it our indispensable duty to call upon him in the time of trouble, and has given his promise that he will hear us.

Q. In what manner ought we to bear our sickness?

A. With patience, humility, and resignation to the Divine will. Almighty God is so gracious, that he always intends well to us; so wise, that he knows what is good for us better than ourselves; and so powerful, that he can perform whatever he pleases.

Q. Of what does the Apostle Paul assure us?

A. That all things work together for good to those who love God. Rom. viii. 28.

X. *Of the Prayer for a sick Child.*

Q. Why has the church appointed this prayer?

A. Because children not being able to intercede for themselves, claim our intercession for them; and God himself, who excuses them because of their incapacity, expects that we should present our petitions for them with the greatest charity and devotion.

Q. Must not that person be extremely inhuman who can neglect this duty?

A. Most certainly; for though children have not words to crave our compassion, yet affecting are their groans and sighs, and a moving oratory is in their very silence, which commands the pity of every benevolent mind.

Q. How may children be considered?

A. As the greatest joy or sorrow of their parents: in health, the highest and sweetest comforts: but then, alas! their tender bodies, and weak estate, render them liable to many casualties and distempers, which occasion great and excessive pangs in the breasts of those so nearly connected with them.

Q. What does Plutarch call children?

A. "Certain and great cares; uncertain and distant comforts."

XI. *Of the Prayer for a Person going to Sea.*

Q. Why ought seamen to desire the prayers of the church?

A. Because all who travel by water are exposed to innumerable dangers: it was said of old, that "seafaring men were not above an inch or two from death:"—because they ought never to enter upon any undertaking which they dare not beg of God to prosper; and because also he alone is able to protect them, and make their ways successful.

XII. *Of the Prayer for a Person under Affliction.*

Q. Why should we pray to God under affliction?

A. Because "affliction springeth not out of the dust;" it has a more sublime origin; he only who made us, and gave us all the comforts we enjoy, has power to continue, or take away his own gifts from us.

Q. Is it the duty of afflicted persons to desire the prayers of the church?

A. Undoubtedly; and this with a firm persuasion that they shall receive very great benefit thereby.

Q. And when any such are mentioned by the priest, as needing and desiring our prayers, what effect should it have upon our minds?

A. We ought to have a due sense of their misery, and most heartily entreat God to relieve them, remembering it may shortly be our lot; and as we shall desire in our affliction, that others may pity and pray for us, so let us do now for them; for if we are unfeeling or unconcerned, we deserve to be denied the mercy of God, and the prayers of the church in our greatest need.

XIII. *Of the Prayer for Malefactors after condemnation.*

Q. Why is the church in duty bound to pray for malefactors under condemnation?

A. Because they are not only liable to the just judgment of men, for their evil deeds, who can kill the body; but also to the solemn and awful condemnation of him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Q. How ought they to demean themselves under their affliction?

A. In such manner as may best express the submission of their will to that of God, and answer all those excellent purposes which he designs their punishment should produce in them.

Q. What particular reason have malefactors to hope for pardon from God?

A. The circumstance of the thief on the cross, who, though a notorious offender, and under the just condemnation of the law, did, nevertheless, upon his repentance, receive the full and perfect remission of all his guilt, from an offended God, even in his expiring moments. So that though they have long withstood the calls of mercy, and abused

the divine forbearance; yet, upon their hearty sorrow and sincere repentance, they also may hope for pardon under their bodily condemnation.

XIV. *Of the occasional Thanksgivings in general.*

Q. Why has our church appointed these thanksgivings to be used upon several occasions?

A. Because there are some blessings and deliverances so particular and personal, that the bare mention of them, in the general thanksgivings of the church, would be insufficient to express our gratitude for them; and therefore it is very requisite we should more solemnly return thanks to God for such unmerited favours in forms proper and suitable to those occasions.

Q. What is the benefit of this duty?

A. It engages our Almighty Benefactor to continue the mercies we enjoy; and also inclines him to give, and fits us to receive more favours.

Q. Whence are these occasional thanksgivings taken?

A. Some of them are partly taken from ancient offices, and the whole are judiciously composed; being not only well adapted to the occasions for which they are appointed; but, like the preceding prayers with which they correspond, as plain and perspicuous as they are rational and devout.

XV. *Of the Thanksgiving of Women after Childbirth.*

Q. When is this thanksgiving to be said?

A. "When any woman, being present in the church, shall have desired to return thanks to Almighty God for her safe deliverance."

Q. Of what does this short and pious collect consist?

A. Of a devout mixture of prayer and praise, so peculiarly suited to the present occasion, that no words are requisite to show its propriety.

XVI. *Of the Thanksgiving for Rain.*

Q. What is the design of this thanksgiving?

A. To excite in us a humble and grateful acknowledgment of God's goodness in this instance of his mercy; to engage us to admire his power, who can water a whole nation at once; to celebrate his wisdom, who chose so seasonable a time to effect this; and to magnify his mercy, who gave us this blessing in so abundant a measure. We may observe, that the very heathens were wont to build altars to the *showering Jupiter;* and that though they were mistaken in the object of their worship, because none of the vanities of the heathen can give rain (Gen. xix. 22), yet they were right in their views of this duty, and are monitors to us, who know the true God and real giver of rain, to render him hearty thanks for it.

XVII. *Of the Thanksgiving for fair Weather.*

Q. What is contained in this collect?

A. An humble acknowledgment of God's justice in our late punishment, and his mercy in our present deliverance; it is also an act of praise for his favour, and a vow of perpetual gratitude.

XVIII. *Of the Thanksgiving for Plenty.*

Q. What is the design of this thanksgiving?

A. To lead us solemnly to acknowledge the return of plenty, as an act of God's special bounty. St. Paul calls fruitful seasons the witnesses of God (Acts xiv. 17): for they testify his care of us, who filleth our hearts with food and gladness. And, besides, since the supplications of the church, through God's mercy, obtained this blessing, it is most reasonable to believe the praises thereof shall continue it; and therefore we ought all devoutly to join in this thanks-

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giving, that our gratitude may be as universal and sincere as our petitions were fervent: then we shall feel the happy effects of our praises, as we do now of our prayers.

XIX. *Of the Thanksgiving for Peace, and Deliverance from our Enemies.*

Q. Why has the church appointed this thanksgiving?

A. Because there is no custom more ancient and universal. Both sacred and prophane history abound in instances of praising God for peace and victory; nay, the very inhabitants of heaven are described as singing glory to God for giving victory to his church over all its enemies. So that if the reason and example of all mankind, and even of angels themselves, can move us, we must not omit this duty.

Q. But how does it appear that "the religion of Christ, who is emphatically styled the Prince of Peace, *permits his disciples to rejoice in sanguinary successes and victories, purchased by the reciprocal destruction of his creatures?*

A. Because "wars are permitted by God as temporal chastisements of human wickedness—because, however repugnant to the mild and pacific spirit of the gospel, they appear to be evils as inherent in the constitution of kingdoms and empires, as sickness and disease are in the human frame; and because, however we may deprecate their consequences, we are authorized, by repeated precedents in sacred history, as I have already observed, as well as by the natural impulse of gratitude, to rejoice in the intimation of divine favour and protection, which victory over our enemies conveys. As long as human pride or prejudice, policy or ambition, continues to operate—that is, as long as human nature and human passions exist as they are, and have been from the earliest times, so long will the evils consequent upon their indulgence, continue to afflict mankind, and to chastise, though they do not cor-

rect, the passions which produce them. There cannot, therefore, be any principle adverse to the spirit of the gospel in the oblation of our praises and thanksgivings to the supreme Governor of the universe on this account.—We rejoice, not that wars exist, but that, since in the system of divine providence they are permitted to disturb the world, and to include our native country in their destructive vortex, the ruin and devastation which would attend their nearer approach, have been repelled from the bosom of our land, by the victories with which he has mercifully favoured us.

XX. *Of the Thanksgiving for restoring Public Peace at home.*

Q. Why ought we to make use of this thanksgiving?

A. Because it is God who maketh men to be of one mind; it is he who stills our troubles, and gives the peace we enjoy. It is the observation of Pindar, "that it is an easy matter for the vilest of men to stir up a city to rebellion; but it would be impossible to appease them, if God did not direct and assist the governors thereof." To him, therefore, we are bound to render most hearty praise for deliverance from rebellion and domestic feuds.

XXI. *Of the Thanksgiving for Deliverance from great Sickness and Mortality.*

Q. What does the church teach us in this collect?

A. To acknowledge, that as our sins have been many, of divers kinds, and of long continuance, so might our punishment justly have been; but our God has showed himself a merciful father, in that he hath not dealt with us according to our deserving. And since we are now delivered from this great calamity, we may very properly give thanks to God in the form here prescribed.

XXII. *Of the Thanksgiving for a Recovery from Sickness.*

Q. Why has our Church appointed this thanksgiving?

A. Because it is a duty which none who have had the prayers of the church should omit after their recovery, lest they incur the reprehension given by our Saviour to the ungrateful lepers recorded in the gospel: *Were there not* ten *cleansed, but where are the nine?*

XXIII. *Of the Thanksgiving for a safe Return from Sea.*

Q. Why has the church enjoined this thanksgiving?

A. Because the most acceptable sacrifice that we can offer to God, is devoutly to praise him, and to recount the wonderful operations of his providence; which mariners, who traverse the sea, have, in a special manner, frequent opportunities of doing. For these men very often behold many astonishing works of God, which are not to be discovered by others; not only in fishes and sea-monsters, but in the surprising commotion of that vast body of waters. When in a mighty tempest they find that their skill in navigation, and all other human endeavours fail, they are constrained to apply to God for help. And then he, who reserves to himself an uncontrolled authority over the winds and waters, in answer to their prayers allays the boisterous storm, and smooths the disturbed waves into a calm and quiet sea. This kind dispensation of providence tends to impress their minds with pleasing and delightful thoughts; especially when they safely arrive at the port to which they are destined. And, therefore, what reason have seamen to be mindful of such goodness of God towards them; and how proper to make a public acknowledgment of it in his church, to show forth their gratitude, both for their own further benefit, and for the edification of others!

CHAPTER V.

Of the Sundays and Holy-Days throughout the Year.

COLOSSIANS ii. 16, 17.

Let no man therefore judge you—in respect to an holy-day, or of the new-moon, or of the Sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

I. *Of the Sundays in general.*

Q. Why was one day in seven ordained to be kept holy?

A. One principal design of it was, that men, by thus sanctifying the seventh day, after they had spent six in labour, might show themselves to be worshippers of that God only, who rested the seventh day after he had finished the heavens and the earth in six.

Q. Why was Saturday the Jewish sabbath?

A. The reasons why the Jews were commanded to observe Saturday for their sabbath in particular, were peculiar to themselves: It was on this day that God delivered them from their Egyptian bondage, and overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea; so that no day could be more properly set apart to celebrate the mercies and goodness of God than that on which he himself chose to confer upon them the greatest blessings they enjoyed.

Q. Why is Sunday observed by Christians?

A. The deliverance of Israel out of Egypt by the ministry of Moses, was intended as a type and pledge of a spiritual deliverance, which was to be effected by Christ: their Canaan also was a type of that heavenly Canaan, which the redeemed by Christ look for. Since, therefore, the shadow is made void by the coming of the substance, the relation is changed, and God is not now to be wor-

shipped and believed in as a God foreshowing and assuring by types, but as a God who hath performed the substance of what he promised. Christians, indeed, as well as Jews, are to observe the moral duties of the fourth commandment, and after six days spent in their own works, are to sanctify the seventh; but in the designation of the particular day, they may and ought to differ. For if the Jews sanctified the seventh day, because they had on that a temporal deliverance, as a pledge of a spiritual one; the Christians certainly have much greater reason to sanctify the first, since on that day God redeemed us from spiritual thraldom, by raising Jesus Christ our Lord from the dead, and by giving us, instead of an earthly Canaan, an inheritance incorruptible in the heavens. And we have the concurrent testimonies of scripture and antiquity, that the first day of the week, or Sunday, hath ever been the stated and solemn time of the Christians meeting for their public worship and service.*

Q. Why and how was Saturday observed by the eastern Christians?

A. In the east, where the gospel chiefly prevailed among the Jews, who retained a great reverence for the Mosaic rites, the church thought fit to indulge the humour of the Judaizing Christians so far as to observe Saturday as a festival day of de-

* Pliny, in his epistle to the emperor Trajan, tells him, "that he found nothing to alledge against the Christians, but their obstinacy in their superstition, and that it was their custom to meet together on a set day before it was light." And what that set day was, Justin Martyr, who wrote but a few years after him, has taken care to inform us. "On Sundays," says he, "all Christians, in the city or country, meet together, because that is the day of our Lord's resurrection; and then we have read to us the writings of the prophets and apostles.—When this is done, the president makes an oration to the assembly, to exhort them to imitate, and do the things which they have heard; and then we all join in prayer, and after that celebrate the sacrament."

votion, whereon they met for the exercise of religious duties, as is plain from several passages of the ancients: But, however, to prevent giving any offence to others, they openly declared, that they observed it in a Christian way, and not as a Jewish sabbath: and this custom was so far from being universal, that at the same time, all over the west, except at Milan in Italy, Saturday was kept as a fast, as being the day on which our Lord lay dead in the grave.

HYMN.

* Again the day returns of holy rest,
Which, when he made the world, Jehovah blest;
When like his own he bade our labour cease,
And all be piety, and all be peace.

While injurious men despise the sage decree,
From vain deceit, and false philosophy;
Let us its wisdom own, its blessings feel,
Receive with gratitude, perform with zeal.

Let us devote this consecrated day
To learn his will, and all we learn obey;
In pure religion's hallow'd duty share,
And join in penitence, and join in prayer.

So that the God of mercy, pleased, receive
That only tribute man has power to give;
So shall he hear, while fervently we raise
Our choral harmony in hymns of praise.

CHORUS.

Father of heaven, in whom our hopes confide,
Whose power defends us, and whose precepts guide;
In life our guardian, and in death our friend,
Glory supreme be thine till time shall end."

II. *Of the Festivals in general.*

Q. What is to be observed of festivals in general?

A. That besides the weekly return of Sunday, whereon we celebrate God's goodness and mercies set forth in our creation and redemption in general, the church hath set apart some days yearly for the more particular remembrance of some special acts and passages of our Lord in the redemption of mankind; such as are his incarnation and nativity, circumcision, manifestation to the Gentiles, fasting, passion, resurrection and ascension, the sending of the Holy Ghost, and the manifestation of the sacred Trinity.

Q. How is it evident, that the observation of such days is requisite?

A. From the practice both of Jews and Gentiles; nature taught the first, and God the latter, that the celebration of solemn festivals was a part of the public exercise of religion.

Q. What festivals had the Jews of their own appointment?

A. Besides the feasts of the passover, of weeks, and of tabernacles, which were all of divine appointment, they instituted the feast of purim and the dedication of the temple; the latter of which, even our blessed Saviour himself honoured with his presence. John x. 22.

Q. Were the Christians obliged to observe the Jewish feasts?

A. No; for these festivals being instituted in remembrance of some signal mercies granted in particular to the Jews, the Christians, who were chiefly converted from the heathen world, were no more obliged, than they were concerned, in the mercies thereon commemorated. And this is the reason, that when the Judaizing Christians would have imposed upon the Galatians the observation of the Jewish festivals, as necessary to salvation, St. Paul considered it as a thing so criminal, that he was

afraid the labour he had bestowed upon them, to establish them in gospel liberty, had been in vain; not that he thought the observation of festivals unlawful, but because they thought themselves still obliged by the law to observe those days and times, which, being only shadows of good things to come, were made void by the coming of the substance.

Q. How early were Christian festivals observed in the church?

A. They were observed even in the first ages of the gospel; for we find, that from the very infancy of christianity some certain days were yearly set apart to commemorate the resurrection and ascension of Christ, the coming of the Holy Ghost, &c. to glorify God by an humble and grateful acknowledgment of the mercies granted to them at those times: which laudable and pious custom so soon prevailed over the universal church, that in less than four hundred years after our Saviour, we meet with days distinguished by the same names we now call them; such as Epiphany, Ascension-day, Whit-Sunday, &c. which were observed upon those days on which our church continues to observe them.

Q. How does our church, in particular, require us to observe the festivals?

A. In such a manner as may best answer the ends for which they were first instituted.

Q. What were those ends?

A. That God may be glorified by an humble and grateful acknowledgment of his mercies; and that the salvation of our souls may be advanced, by firmly believing the mysteries of our redemption, and imitating the example of those primitive patterns of piety which are set before us.

III. *Of Days of Fasting or Abstinence in general.*

Q. Why has the church appointed days of fasting or abstinence?

A. Because fasting or abstinence from our usual

sustenance is a proper mean to express sorrow and grief, and a fit method to dispose our minds towards the consideration of any thing that is serious; and as it is a duty which nature seems to suggest, all nations, from ancient times, have therefore used it as a part of repentance, and as a mean to avert the anger of God. This is plain in the case of the Ninevites, whose notion of fasting, to appease the divine wrath, seems to have been common to them with the rest of mankind. In the Old Testament, besides the examples of private fasting by David, Daniel, and others, we have instances of public fasts observed by the whole nation of the Jews at once, upon solemn occasions. It is true, indeed, in the New Testament we find no positive precept, that expressly requires and commands us to fast; but our Saviour mentions fasting, with almsgiving and prayer, which are unquestionable duties; and the directions he gave concerning the performance of it, sufficiently supposes it necessary: and he himself was pleased, before he entered upon his ministry, to give us an extraordinary example in his own person, by fasting forty days and forty nights. We also find, that after his ascension the duty of fasting was not only recommended, but practised by the Apostles, as any one may see in the Acts of the Apostles, chap. xiii. 2, and chap. xiv. 23; and also the two Epistles of St. Paul to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. ix. 27. 2 Cor. vi. 5, and xi. 27. After the Apostles, we find the primitive Christians very constant and regular in the observation both of their annual and weekly fasts. Their weekly fasts were kept on Wednesdays and Fridays, because on the one our Lord was betrayed, on the other crucified. The chief of their annual fasts was that of *Lent*, which they observed by way of preparation for the feast of Easter.

Q. How were the days of fasting observed by the primitive Christians?

A. Their manner of observing them was very

strict; it being their general custom to abstain from all food till the public services of the church were concluded, which was usually about three of the clock in the afternoon, though in the time of *Lent* they were not to eat till six in the evening.

Q. Does our church make any difference between days of fasting and days of abstinence?

A. No; she calls them all days of fasting or abstinence, without distinction; neither does she direct what food is proper for such times or seasons, or place any part of religion in abstaining from any particular kinds of meat. The distinction of clean and unclean meats terminated with the Mosaic law; and therefore we are to consider, that days and meats are in themselves all of the same nature and quality as to moral consideration, one not having any inherent holiness above the other.

Q. What days and seasons does our church observe as fasts?

A. They are such as she finds to have been observed with fasting and abstinence by the earliest ages of the Christian church in every kingdom, and are as follow: Ash-Wednesday; Good-Friday, the season of Lent; the Ember-days at the four seasons, being the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after the first Sunday in Lent, after the feast of Pentecost, September 14, and December 13; the three Rogation days, being the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before *Holy Thursday*, or the ascension of our Lord; and all the Fridays in the year, except Christmas-day be a Friday. As to Friday in particular, it was always observed by the primitive Christians as a day of fasting, who thought it was very proper to humble themselves on the same day weekly, on which the blessed Jesus once humbled himself, even to the death of the cross, for us miserable sinners.

IV. *Of the Saints' Days in general.*

Q. What other days, besides the more solemn festivals, whereon they were accustomed to celebrate the mysteries of redemption, did the primitive Christians observe?

A. Besides the more solemn festivals, the primitive Christians have their *Memoriæ Martyrum*, or certain days set apart yearly in commemoration of the great worthies of christianity, the blessed Apostles and Martyrs, who had attested the truth of their religion with their blood.

Q. How were those days observed by the primitive Christians?

A. They constantly met at the graves of the saints once a year, to celebrate their virtues, and to bless God for their exemplary lives and glorious deaths, to the intent that others might be encouraged to the same patience and fortitude; as also that virtue, even in this world, might not wholly lose its reward.

Q. How ancient was this practice, and upon what was it founded?

A. It is, doubtless, of very great antiquity, and was probably founded upon St. Paul's exhortation to the Hebrews; who, to encourage them to constancy in the faith, advises them to be mindful of their bishops and ministers, who had preached to them the gospel, and had sealed it with their blood. Heb. xiii. 7.

Q. What examples have we for this practice among the primitive Christians?

A. We find that those who were eye-witnesses of the sufferings of St. Ignatius, published the day of his martyrdom, that the church of Antioch might meet together at that time to celebrate the memory of such a valiant combatant and martyr of Christ. After this we read of the church of Smyrna giving an account of St. Polycarp's martyrdom, which was

A. D. 168, and of the place where they had entombed his bones; at the same time professing that they would assemble in that place, and celebrate the birth-day of his martyrdom with joy and gladness.

Q. Why were the days of the martyrs' death called their birth-days by the primitive Christians?

A. They were especially called their birth-days, because they looked upon these days as the days of their nativity, whereon they were freed from the pains and sorrows of a troublesome world, and born to the joys and happiness of an endless life.

Q. What do we learn concerning these solemnities from Tertullian?

A. That they were yearly celebrated, and were afterwards observed with so much care and strictness, that it was thought prophane to be absent from the Christian assemblies at such times.

Q. By whom were saints days, and other holy days, first vilified and wilfully disregarded?

A. By those who first vilified and disregarded episcopacy after the Reformation.

V. *Of the Epistles and Gospels in general.*

Q. What is to be observed concerning the service for the festivals?

A. That on all these days, the church enlarges her ordinary devotions; adding particular lessons on most of them, proper portions of psalms on some, and the communion office on all. As to the epistle and gospel, there is one of each appointed for every Sunday and holy-day throughout the year.

Q. What is the antiquity of the epistles and gospels?

A. They have been affixed to those Sundays and holy-days on which we now use them, for more than a thousand years, as might easily be proved by divers authorities.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the choice of the epistles and gospels?

A. That they are so judiciously selected from the evangelic and apostolic writings, that it would be difficult to find passages more interesting, or more pertinent to the occasion and the season.

Q. Why are the people required to stand up at the reading of the gospel?

A. The custom of standing up, and saying, "Glory be to thee, O Lord," when the minister was about to read the holy gospel, and of singing Hallelujah, or saying, *Thanks be to God for his holy gospel*, when he had concluded it, is as old as St. Chrysostom. In St. Augustine's time, the people always stood when the lessons were read, to show their reverence to God's holy word: but afterwards, when this was thought too great a burthen, they were allowed to sit down at the lessons, and were obliged to stand only at the reading of the gospel, which always contains something that our Lord did, spake, or suffered, in his own person.

VI. *Of the Sundays in Advent.*

Q. How many Sundays are there in Advent?

A. Four; the first of which is always the next Sunday after the six and twentieth of November; or, according to the Prayer Book, "Advent Sunday is always the nearest Sunday to the feast of St. Andrew, whether before or after."

Q. Why are they called Advent Sundays?

A. Because the design of them is to prepare our minds, by proper meditations, for a religious commemoration of the *Advent* or coming of Christ in the flesh; and also to remind us of his future coming in glory to judge the world; for which reason the collect for the first of these Sundays is to be repeated, together with that of the day, during the whole season of Advent.

Q. How ancient is the observation of them?

A. The precise time of their institution cannot easily be determined, though they certainly had

their beginning before the year 450, because Maximus Tauriensis, who lived at that time, wrote a homily upon them.

Q. Of what do the epistles and gospels on these Sundays assure us?

A. Of the truth of Christ's first coming; and as a proper means to bring our lives to a conformity with the end and design of it, they recommend to us the consideration of his second coming, when he will execute vengeance on all those who obey not his gospel.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the peculiar computation of the church?

A. That she begins her year, and renews the annual course of her holy and divine service, at this time of Advent, therein differing from all other accounts of time whatsoever.

Q. Why does the church begin her year at this Advent?

A. Because she neither numbers her days, nor measures her seasons, so much by the motion of the sun in the firmament as by the course of her Lord and Saviour; beginning and continuing her year with him, who being the true Sun of righteousness, began now to rise upon the world, and, as the day-star on high, to enlighten those who sat in spiritual darkness.

VII. *Of Christmas-Day, December 25th.*

Q. What does Christmas signify?

A. A solemn festival in commemoration of the birth of Christ; whereby so many divine oracles were accomplished, so many prophecies fulfilled, so many types verified.

Q. What authority have we for the observation of this festival?

A. The practice of the primitive church.*

* On this day the primitive Christians always received the Lord's supper.

Q. What is the testimony of St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom concerning it?

A. They both call the observation of it a primitive custom; and tell us, that it was celebrated upon the 25th of December, even from the very first ages of christianity.

Q. What does the church teach us in the lessons, epistle, and gospel?

A. In the first lessons she reads to us the clearest prophecies of Christ's coming in the flesh; and in the second lessons, epistle and gospel, shows us the completion of those prophecies, by giving us the entire history of the event.

Q. What does she teach us to pray for in the collect?

A. That we may be partakers of the benefits of his birth; and in the portion of psalms, selected for the day, she excites us to our duty of praising and glorifying God for this incomprehensible mystery.

VIII. *Of the Sunday after Christmas.*

Q. What peculiar custom had the primitive Christians concerning the principal feasts of the church?

A. It was a custom among them to observe the octave, or eighth day after their principal feasts, with great solemnity.

Q. For what reason did they observe the octaves?

A. Because the subject of their principal feasts was of so high a nature, and so nearly concerned our salvation, that one day would be too little to meditate upon them, and praise God as we ought. A bodily deliverance may justly require one day of thanksgiving and joy; but the deliverance of the soul, by the blessings commemorated on those festivals, deserves a much longer time of praise and acknowledgment. Since, therefore, it would be injurious to Christians to have their joy and thankfulness for such mercies confined to one day, the church, upon the times when these unspeakable

blessings were wrought for us, invites us, by her most seasonable commands and counsels, to fill our hearts with joy and thankfulness, and to let them overflow for eight days together.

Q. What is the reason of their being fixed to eight days?

A. It is taken from the practice of the Jews, who, by God's appointment, observed their festivals, some of them for seven, and one, namely, the Feast of Tabernacles, for eight days, Levit. xxii. 36; and, therefore, the primitive church, thinking that the observation of Christian festivals, of which the Jewish feasts were only types, ought not to come short of theirs, lengthened them out to eight days; and upon every day between the feast and the octave, as also upon the octave itself, they used to repeat some part of that service which was performed upon the feast; in imitation of which religious custom, this day always falling within the octave of Christmas-day, the collect is then repeated; and the epistle and gospel still set forth the mysteries of our redemption, by the birth of Christ.

IX. *Of the Circumcision of Christ, January 1st.*

Q. How ancient is the feast of circumcision?

A. The first that mentions it, is Maximus Tauriensis, who flourished in the year of our Lord 450. And St. Bernard has several sermons upon it.

Q. What is the design of it?

A. To commemorate the active obedience of Jesus Christ in fulfilling all righteousness, which is one branch of the meritorious cause of our redemption; by that means abrogating the severe injunctions of the Mosaical establishment, and putting us under the easier terms of the gospel.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the proper services?

A. That they are all very suitable to the day; the first lesson for the morning gives an account of

the institution of circumcision; and the gospel, of the circumcision of Christ. The first lesson at evening, and the second lesson and epistle, tend to the same end, viz. that since the circumcision of the flesh is now abrogated, God has no respect of persons, and requires no more of us than the circumcision of the heart.*

X. *Of the Epiphany, January 6th.*

Q. What does Epiphany signify?

A. The word epiphany, in Greek, signifies *manifestation*, and was at first used both for Christmas-day, when Christ was manifested in the flesh, and for this day, to which it is now more properly appropriated, when he was manifested by a star to the gentiles. From the identity of the word, some have concluded that the feast of Christmas-day, and the Epiphany were the same; but that they were two different feasts, observed upon two several days, is plain from many of the Fathers.†

Q. To what end was this feast instituted?

A. Principally to show our gratitude to God, in manifesting the gospel to the gentile world; and vouchsafing to them equal privileges with the Jews, who were his peculiar people. The first instance of this divine favour was in declaring the birth of Christ to the wise men of the east.

Q. How many manifestations of our Saviour are there commemorated on this day?

A. Three; each of which, St. Chrysostom tells us, happened on the same day, though not in the same year: The first was his manifestation by a star, that conducted the wise men‡ to the place of his

* The same collect, epistle and gospel are to serve for every day after the circumcision, unto the Epiphany.

† Aug. Serm. 102, tom. v. col. 914. Greg. Naz. Orat. 39. tom. i. &c. et in aliis.

‡ These wise men, in all probability, came from Arabia Felix, a country situate to the south east of India; and having

nativity; the second was that of the glorious Trinity at his baptism, mentioned in the second lesson at morning prayer; and the second lesson at evening service contains the third, which was the manifestation of the divinity of Christ, by his miraculously turning water into wine. The lessons contain prophecies of the increase of the church, by the abundant access of the gentiles, of which the epistle mentions the completion, giving an account that the mystery of the gospel was revealed to them.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For the knowledge of God by faith in this world, and the enjoyment and fruition of him in the world to come.

XI. *Of the Sundays after the Epiphany.*

Q. How many Sundays are there after Epiphany?

A. Six; but they are not all used every year, for sometimes Septuagesima Sunday comes sooner and sometimes later.

Q. What is the design of the epistles and gospels?

A. From Christmas to Epiphany, the church's design, in all her proper services, is to set forth the humanity of our Saviour, and to manifest him in the flesh: but from the Epiphany to Septuagesima Sunday, especially the four following Sundays, she endeavours to manifest his divinity, by recounting to us, in the gospel, some of his first miracles and manifestations of his deity. The design of the epistles is to excite us to imitate Christ as far as is in our power; and to manifest ourselves to be his disciples, by a constant practice of all Christian virtues.

found the infant Saviour lying in a manger, they offered him precious gifts, and did him homage, as we read Matt. ii. 11. And here let us note, that the offering of gold signified Christ to be a king. Myrrhe being used for dead persons, signifies that he was to die; and the incense signifies him to be God.

XII. *Of Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima Sundays.*

Q. Why are these Sundays so called?

A. The first Sunday in Lent, being forty days before Easter, was for that reason called Quadragesima Sunday, which in Latin signifies fortieth; and fifty being the next round number above forty, as sixty is to fifty, and seventy to sixty; therefore, the Sunday immediately preceding Quadragesima Sunday, being farther from Easter than that, was called Quinquagesima Sunday, which is also fifty days, inclusive, before Easter; and the two foregoing Sundays, being still further distant, were, for the same reason, called Sexagesima and Septuagesima Sundays.

Q. What is the design of them?

A. The design of them is to prepare us for fasting and humiliation, in the approaching time of Lent; from thinking on the manner of Christ's coming into the world, to reflect upon the cause of it, viz. our own sins and miseries; that so being convinced of the reasonableness of mortifying ourselves for our sins, we may the more strictly and religiously apply ourselves to this duty, when the proper time for it shall come. Some of the more devout Christians observed the whole time, from the first of these Sundays to Easter, as a season of humiliation and fasting; though the generality of the people did not begin their fast till Ash-Wednesday.

Q. How ancient is the observation of these days?

A. It is doubtless as ancient as the time of Gregory the Great, who flourished about 590.

Q. What is to be observed of the epistles?

A. That they are suitable to the times, and are all taken out of St. Paul's epistles to the Corinthians. The two first persuades us to acts of mortification, by proposing to us St. Paul's example: but because all bodily exercises, without charity, profit us no-

thing; therefore the church, in the epistle for Quinquagesima Sunday, recommends charity as a necessary foundation for all our other acts of religion.

Q. What is the design of the gospels?

A. It is much the same with that of the epistles. That for Septuagesima Sunday informs us, by way of parable, that all who expect to be rewarded hereafter, must perform these religious duties now; and to all those who have been so idle as to neglect them, it affords comfort, by assuring them that they may still entitle themselves to a reward, if they will immediately engage in them with diligence and sincerity. The gospel for Sexagesima Sunday, in another parable, admonishes us to be careful and circumspect in the performance of our duty, since there are, comparatively, but few who profess religion that bring forth fruit to perfection. And, lastly, the gospel for Quinquagesima Sunday shows us how we are to perform these duties, advising us, by the example of the blind beggar, to add faith to our charity; to continue incessant in our prayers, and not to despair of the acceptance of them, because we are not immediately heard, but to cry so much the more, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on us."

XIII. *Of the forty Days in Lent.*

Q. What is Lent?

A. A solemn time of fasting and abstinence; so called from an old Saxon word which signifies the *spring*; and is therefore used to denote this holy season, which belongs to that part of the year, it being observed by Christians as a time of humiliation before Easter, the great festival of our Saviour's resurrection.

Q. How ancient is the observation of this fast?

A. It is of very great antiquity. Irenæus, who lived but ninety years from the death of St. John, and conversed familiarly with St. Polycarp, as St.

Polycarp had with that Apostle, has informed us, though incidentally, that as it was observed in his time, so it was also in that of his predecessors.

Q. What is the origin of it?

A. Probably, like other Christian observances, it took its rise from a Jewish custom, corresponding with their preparation for the yearly expiation: their humiliation began forty days before the commemoration of the expiation of the sins of the whole world.

Q. How was it at first observed in the Christian church?

A. With great variety as to the length of it; some fasting so many hours, others so many days, others so many weeks, and others again for so many days in each week; but it is most probable, that this fast was first called by the Greeks *Tessarakoste*, and the Latins *Quadragesima;* both which words denote the number *forty*, not because it continued forty days, but forty hours; beginning about 12 of the clock on Friday, the time of our Saviour's submitting to the power of death, and continuing till Sunday morning, the time of his rising from the dead. This was afterwards drawn out into more days, and then weeks, till it settled in forty days.

Q. Why was this fast afterwards limited to forty days?

A. Because this number seems very anciently to have been appropriated to repentance and humiliation. This was the number of days, during which God covered the earth with the deluge, Gen. vii. 4; the number of years in which the children of Israel did penance in the wilderness, Numbers xiv. 34; the number of days Moses fasted in the mount, Deut. ix. and Elias in the wilderness, Kings xix. 8. The Ninevites had this number of days allowed for their repentance, Jonah iii. 4; and our Lord, when he was pleased to fast in the wilderness, observed the same length of time. Matt. ix. 2. So that

whoever considers these circumstances, cannot but think that this number of days is very suitable to this season of extraordinary humiliation.

Q. Was this solemn season of fasting universally observed by all Christians?

A. Yes; though with a great liberty, and a just allowance for men's infirmities, which was in a great measure left to their own discretion. If men were in health, and able to bear it, the rule and custom was for them to observe it. On the other hand, bodily infirmity and weakness were always admitted as a just apology for their non-observance of it.

Q. What was the ancient manner of observing Lent?

A. Among those who were piously disposed, it was the custom to abstain from all food till evening. Their common refreshment being only a supper, it was indifferent whether it was flesh or any other food, provided it was used with sobriety and moderation.* Lent was also thought the proper season for exercising more abundantly all sorts of charity. Thus, what they spared from their own bodies, by abridging them of a meal, was usually given to the poor. They likewise employed their vacant hours in visiting the sick and imprisoned, in entertaining strangers, and reconciling differences. The imperial laws forbade all prosecution of men in criminal actions, which might bring them to corporal punishment and torture, during this whole season. In many of the great churches, they had religious assemblies for prayer and preaching every

*. That there was no general rule about this matter, will appear from the story which Sozomen tells of Spiridion, Bishop of Trimithius, in Cyprus: a stranger once happening to call upon him in Lent, he having nothing in his house but a piece of pork, ordered that to be dressed and set before him; but the stranger refusing to eat flesh, saying he was a Christian; Spiridion replied, for that very reason thou oughtest not to refuse it; for the word of God has pronounced all things clean to those who are clean.

day. They had also frequent communions at this time, at least on every Sabbath and Lord's day. All public games and stage-plays were prohibited at this season; as also the celebration of all festivals, birth-days, and marriages, as unsuitable to the present occasion.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collects for this holy season?

A. For the gift of repentance; for grace to use such abstinence as may be serviceable to the subduing of the flesh to the spirit; for protection from bodily adversities, and from evil thoughts; for comfort and pardon; and for grace to follow the example of our Saviour's patience, that so we may be partakers of his resurrection.

XIV. *Of Ash-Wednesday.*

Q. Why does Lent begin on Ash-Wednesday?

A. The first day of Lent had formerly two names, one of which was *Caput Jejunii*, the head of the fast; the other *Dies Cinerum*, Ash-Wednesday; for since it was never the custom of the church to fast on Sundays, whereon we commemorate so great a blessing as our Saviour's resurrection, we therefore begin Lent on this day, to supply the room of those Sundays: for if we deduct out of the six weeks of Lent the six Sundays, there will remain but thirty-six fasting days, to which these four of this week being added, make up the exact number of forty.

Q. How is Ash-Wednesday observed in our church?

A. It is observed as a day of fasting and humiliation, wherein we are publicly to confess our sins, meekly to implore God's mercy and forgiveness, and humbly to intercede for the continuance of his favour.

Q. What in particular is to be observed concerning the collect for this day?

A. That it is to be repeated every day in Lent, after the collect appointed for the day.

XV. *Of the Sundays in Lent.*

Q. What is the design of the epistles and gospels on these Sundays?

A. Though the church allows us to interrupt our fasts on the Sundays in Lent, by reason of the eminency of those days, yet, lest the pleasantness of those intervals should entice us to a discontinuance of our mortification and abstinence in the returning week-days, when we ought to renew it with the greater zeal, she takes care to remind us of the duties we have undertaken, and therefore in the epistles sets before us the obligation we are under of returning to our acts of self-denial and humiliation: But because all this without charity is nothing worth, the gospels are designed to excite us to the exercise of that great duty in all its branches, by proposing to us the example of our great Lord and Master, the blessed Jesus, who not only fasted and withstood the greatest temptations of doing evil in his own person, but went about seeking opportunities of doing good to others; healing the sick, feeding the hungry, blessing those that cursed him, and doing good to those that despitefully used him; in all which actions we are, at this time more especially, bound to imitate him.

XVI. *Of the Passion-Week.*

Q. Why was the Sunday next before Easter formerly called Palm-Sunday?

A. Because on this day Christ entered into Jerusalem, and the people cut down palm branches and strewed them in the way.

Q. Why was the following week called the Passion Week?

A. Because it was by some looked upon as a distinct time of fasting from the foregoing Lent, and as instituted upon different accounts: *That*,

being observed in imitation of our Saviour's fasting; &c. as has been mentioned; *this*, in commemoration of his sufferings and passion which he then completed. But by others it was only accounted a continuation of the same fast, in a stricter degree; it being generally called THE GREAT WEEK, because in this week was transacted an affair of the greatest importance to the happiness of man; actions, indeed, truly great were performed to secure his salvation; death was conquered, the devil's tyranny was abolished, the partition-wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down, and God and man were reconciled! It was also called THE HOLY WEEK, from those devout exercises in which Christians employed themselves upon this occasion.

Q. How was it anciently observed?

A. In ancient times they applied themselves to prayer, both in public and in private; to hearing and reading God's holy word, and exercising a most solemn repentance for those sins which crucified the Lord of life. They observed the whole week with great strictness of fasting and humiliation; some fasting three days together, some four, and others, who could bear it, the whole six; beginning on Monday morning, and not eating any thing again till cock-crowing on the Sunday morning following.

Q. What is recorded of some of the Christian emperors?

A. That several of them, to show what veneration they had for this holy season, caused all lawsuits to cease, tribunal-doors to be shut, and prisoners to be set free; thereby imitating their great Lord and Master, who, by his death at this time, delivered us from the prison and chains of sin.

Q. How is it observed by our church?

A. Our church uses all the means she can to retain this decent and pious custom, and hath made sufficient provision for the exercise of the devotion of her members in public, by calling us every day

this week, to meditate upon our Lord's sufferings; and by collecting in the lessons, epistles, and gospels, most of those portions of scripture which relate to this tragical subject, to increase our humiliation by the consideration of that of our Saviour; to the end, that with penitent hearts and firm resolutions of dying to sin, we may attend our Saviour through the several stages of his bitter passion. But though there are epistles and gospels for every day separately, yet there is no collect appointed but for Sunday, in order that the solemnity of the present week might be connected together as one continued service till Good Friday.

XVII. *Of the Thursday before Easter.*

Q. Why was this day called Maunday-Thursday?

A. It was called *Maunday* or *Mendate* Thursday (Dies Mandati) from the commandment which our Saviour gave his Apostles to commemorate him in the sacrament of his supper, which he this day instituted, after the celebration of the Passover; and which was for that reason generally received in the evening.*

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistle and gospel?

A. That the gospel for this day is suitable to the time, as treating of our Saviour's passion; and that the epistle contains an account of the institution of the Lord's supper, being appointed because that blessed sacrament was always celebrated on this day, in commemoration of its being first instituted thereon.

XVIII. *Of Good-Friday.*

Q. Why is this day called Good-Friday?

A. This day received its name from the blessed effects of our Saviour's sufferings, which are the

* Council of Carthage, 3 Can. 29. Codex Canon Eccles. Afric. Can. 41.

source of all our joy; and from those unspeakable good things he hath purchased for us by his death. On this day the blessed Jesus made expiation for the sins of the whole world, and by the shedding of his own blood, obtained eternal redemption for us.

Q. Why was it observed as a fast?

A. The commemoration of our Saviour's sufferings has been kept from the very first ages of christianity,* and was always observed as a day of the strictest fasting and humiliation; not that the grief and affliction which Christians then expressed arose from the loss they sustained, but from a sense of the guilt of the whole world, which drew upon our blessed Redeemer the painful and shameful death of the cross.

Q. Why is the gospel for this day taken out of St. John's gospel, rather than that of any other Evangelist?

A. Because he was the only Apostle who was present at the passion, and stood by the cross, while the others fled; and therefore the passion being, as it were, represented before our eyes, we read the testimony of him who saw it himself, and from whose example we may learn not to be ashamed or afraid of the cross of Christ.†

Q. What does the epistle prove?

A. It proves from the insufficiency of the Jewish sacrifices, that they only typified a more sufficient one, which the Son of God did, as on this day, offer up, and by one oblation of himself then made upon the cross, completed all the other sacrifices, which were only shadows of this, and made full satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. The church has appointed three collects for this day, with an intention to give the greater solemnity to the service of it.

* Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. cap. xvii. p. 57. Apost. Const. lib. v. cap. xiii.

† Rupertus de Officiis Divinis, lib. vi. cap. viii.

Q. What do we learn from the collects?

A. That in imitation of Christ's infinite love, the church endeavours to show her affection to be boundless and unlimited, by praying that the effects of Christ's death may be as universal as the design of it, viz. that it may tend to the salvation of all—Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics.

Q. How does the suitableness of the proper psalms for the day appear?

A. Their suitableness is obvious to any one who reads them with due attention: they were all composed by David in times of great calamity and distress; and do most of them belong, mystically, to the crucifixion of our Saviour; especially the twenty-second, which is the first for the morning, and was, in several passages, literally fulfilled by his sufferings, and part of it recited by him upon the cross.

Q. What do we learn from the lessons?

A. The first lesson for the morning is Gen. xxii. to verse 20, containing an account of Abraham's readiness to offer up his son Isaac, thereby typifying that perfect oblation which was this day made by the Son of God. This was thought so proper a lesson for this occasion, that the church used it upon this day in St. Austin's time.* The second lesson is St. John xviii. which needs no application. The first lesson for evening, which is Isaiah lii. verse 13, and chapter liii. contains a clear prophecy of the passions of Christ, and of the benefits which the church thereby receives. The second lesson is Philippians ii. exhorting us to humility from the example of Christ, who took upon himself the form of a servant to teach us this important lesson.

* Serm. de Term. 71.

XIX. *Of Easter-Even.*

Q. How was this eve observed in the primitive church?

A. It was celebrated with more than ordinary devotions, with solemn watchings, with multitudes of lighted torches, both in their churches and their own private houses, and with the general resort of all ranks, of the magistrates as well as the people.*

Q. How, in particular, was it observed at Constantinople?

A. With most magnificent illuminations, not only within the church, but without. All over the city lighted torches were set up, or rather pillars of wax, which gloriously turned the night into day.†

Q. What was the design of all this?

A. It was designed to indicate the approach of that great light, even the Sun of Righteousness, which the next day arose upon the world, and by unbarring the gates of death, manifested himself to be "the resurrection, the way, the truth, and the life."

Q. How long did the vigil continue at night?

A. As the day was kept as a strict fast, the vigil continued at least till midnight; the congregation not being dismissed till that time;‡ it being a tradition of the church, that our Saviour rose a little after midnight: But in the east the vigil lasted till cock-crowing, the time being spent in reading the law and the prophets, in expounding those holy scriptures, and in baptizing the catechumens.‖

Q. How is this eve observed by our church?

A. Such decent solemnities would, in these days, be looked upon as superstitious and antichristian;

* Greg. Naz. Orat. 42. tom. i. p. 676. D.
† Euseb. Vit. Const. lib. iv. cap. xxii. p. 536.
‡ Const. Apost. lib. v. cap. xviii.
‖ Const. Apost. lib. v. cap. xiv. xvii. xviii.

for which reason, since they are only indifferent, though innocent ceremonies, our church has laid them aside; but for the exercise of the devotion of her children, she retains so much of the primitive discipline as to advise us to fast in private; and she calls us together in public, to meditate upon our Saviour's death and burial; which article of our faith the public service of the church this day confirms, the epistle asserting Christ's death, (1 Pet. iii. 17) the gospel treating of his body lying in the grave. Matt. xxvii. 57.

XX. *Of Easter-Day.*

Q. When was Easter-Day observed, and why was it so called?

A. This anniversary festival, in memory of Christ's resurrection, has always been observed from the times of the Apostles, as any man who hath any knowledge of the affairs of the ancient church must allow. From the old Saxon word *Oster*, signifying to rise, we call this festival *Easter-day.*

Q. In what manner was it celebrated?

A. With the greatest solemnity;* it always being accounted the highest of festivals. In the primitive times, the Christians of all churches on this day used this salutation, *Christ is risen!* to which those who were saluted answered, *Christ is risen indeed!* or else thus, *And hath appeared unto Simon!* Luke xxiv. 34. In imitation of which solemn custom, instead of the anthem called the *Venite exultemus*, at morning prayer, we salute one another in other anthems to the same purpose, and mutually exhort each other to keep the feast; the mysteries of which we proceed to celebrate in the proper psalms,† or in the selection of psalms appointed for the day.

* Greg. Naz. Orat. 42. tom. i. p. 676.

† Morning, Psalm ii. lvii. cxi. Evening, Psalm cxiii. cxiv. cxviii.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For the blessed effects of our Saviour's resurrection.

Q. How long did our Saviour continue in the grave?

A. Part of three days, viz. from Friday about three o'clock in the afternoon, till Sunday morning.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the lessons, epistle and gospel?

A. That the first lesson for the morning, and the first lesson for evening service,* contain an account of the Passover, and of the Israelites' deliverance out of Egypt, both very suitable to the day; for by their Passover, Christ our Passover was prefigured; and the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt was a type of our deliverance from death and sin, by our redemption through the blood of Christ. The gospel and the second lesson for the evening, give us the full evidence of Christ's resurrection; and the epistle and the second lesson for this morning, teach us what use we must make of the important event.

XXI. *Of the Monday and Tuesday in Easter-Week.*

Q. How long was the feast of Easter celebrated?

A. Among the primitive Christians, this *first of feasts*, as those fathers called it, was so highly esteemed, that it was solemnized fifty days together, even from Easter to Witsuntide;† during which time, baptism was confirmed; all fasts were suspended and counted unlawful; they prayed standing, in token of joy; and they accounted those

* Morning, first lesson, Exod. xii. to verse 37. Second lesson, Rom. vi.—Evening, first lesson, Exod xii. verse 37. Second lesson, Acts ii. verse 22.

† Tert. de Jejuniis, cap. xiv. p. 552. B. De Idol. cap. xiv. p. 94. B. De Coron. Mil. cap. iii. p. 102. A. Concil. Nicen. Can. 20, tom ii. col. 37.

days in a manner equal to Sunday. As the spirit of devotion abated, this feast was shortened; yet long after Tertullian, even to Gratian's time and afterwards, the whole weeks of Easter and Whitsuntide were regarded as holy days.* And in our church, though she hath appointed epistles and gospels for the Monday and Tuesday only of this week, which contain full evidences of our Saviour's resurrection,† yet she seems to recommend the observing of the whole week for holy-days, by prescribing the communion to be celebrated for eight days together; as may be concluded from the proper preface appointed in the communion office, which is never to be used but when the Lord's supper is administered.

Q. Why was Easter-Week so solemnly observed?

A. The occasion of this week's solemnity is principally intended for expressing our joy for our Lord's resurrection: But among the ancients, there was another peculiar reason for the solemn observation of this week. For, except in cases of necessity, they admitted baptism at no other times than Easter and Whitsuntide; at Easter, in memory of Christ's death and resurrection; correspondent to which, the two parts of the Christian life are represented in baptism, dying unto sin, and rising again unto newness of life; and at Whitsuntide, in memory of the Apostles being then baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire,‡ (Matt. iii. 11) whereby the declaration of John the Baptist concerning our blessed Saviour was fulfilled; and of their having themselves, at that time, baptized with water, three

* Gratian. de Consecrat. Dert. iii. cap. i. p. 2421.

† It is probable that Wednesday formerly had also an epistle and gospel. See Archbishop Islep's constitution in Mr. Johnson's Ecclesiastical laws, and his notes upon it. A. D. 1362, 3.

‡ Our public translation reads thus:—"He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." But I see no reason why the original may not be rendered, He shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost even as with fire.

thousand converts, Acts ii. 41, as Christ commanded; this communication of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles being in some measure represented and conveyed by baptism. After these times, they made it part of their festivity the week following, to congratulate the access of a new progeny; the new baptized coming each day to church in white garments, with lights before them, in token that they had now laid aside their works of darkness, were become the children of light, and had made a resolution to lead a new, innocent and unspotted life.* At church, thanksgivings and prayers were made for them: and those who had arrived to years of discretion (for in those times many such were proselyted from heathenism), were instructed in the principles and doctrines of christianity. But afterwards, when most of the baptized were infants, and so not capable of such solemnities, this custom was altered, and baptism was administered at all times of the year.

XXII. *Of the Sundays after Easter.*

Q. Why was the first Sunday after Easter formerly called Low-Sunday?

A. From a custom of the ancients, who used to repeat on the octave, or Sunday after Easter, some part of the solemnity which was proper to that day; this Sunday being celebrated as a feast, though of a lower degree than Easter. Hence the collect is composed out of the collects and anthem for that day.

Q. Why was it also called Dominica in Albis?

A. It was called *Dominica in Albis* in Latin, or rather *Post Albas* (sc. depositas), as some ritualists call it, because those who were baptized on Easter-eve, on this day laid aside those white robes or chrysoms which were put upon them at their bap-

* Ambr. de Initiand. cap. vii. tom. iv. col. 348.

tism; these were preserved in the churches, that they might be produced as evidences against them, if they should afterwards violate or deny that faith which they had professed in their baptism. And we may still observe, that the epistle seems to be adapted to such a solemnity; for it contains an exhortation to the new baptized persons to labour to overcome the world, which at their baptism they had resolved to do.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the other Sundays after Easter?

A. That they were all spent in joyful commemorations (as we have already related) of our Saviour's resurrection, and the promise of the Comforter; and, accordingly, we find that those grand occasions of joy and exultation are the principal subjects from Easter to Whitsuntide. But, lest our joy, always apt to carry us too far, should be excessive, the epistles for that period exhort us to the practice of such duties as are answerable to the professions of Christians; admonishing us to believe in Christ; to rise from the death of sin; to be patient, loving, meek, charitable, &c. having our blessed Lord himself for our example, and the promise of his Spirit for our guide, strength, and comfort.

Q. Why, in particular, does the gospel for the fifth Sunday after Easter seem to be allotted for that day?

A. Upon two accounts; first, because it foretels our Saviour's ascension, which the church commemorates on the Thursday following; and, secondly, because it is applicable to the rogations, which were performed the succeeding days.

XXIII. *Of the Rogation Days.*

Q. When were the rogation days first observed?

A. About the middle of the fifth century: Mamercus, bishop of Vienna, upon the prospect of some particular calamities which threatened his dio-

cese, appointed extraordinary prayers and supplications to be offered up, with fasting, to God, for averting those impending evils, upon the three days immediately preceding the day of our Lord's ascension; for which supplications (styled by the Greeks litanies, but by the Latins, rogations), these days have ever since been called Rogation Days. For some few years after this example was followed by Sidonius, bishop of Clermont; though he indeed hints that Mamercus was rather the restorer than the inventor of the rogations; and in the beginning of the sixth century the first council of Orleans ordained that they should be yearly observed.

Q. What was the design of their institution?

A. In these fasts the church had a regard not only to prepare our minds to celebrate our Saviour's ascension after a devout manner; but also by fervent prayers and humiliation, to appease God's wrath and deprecate his displeasure; that so he might avert those judgments which the sins of a nation deserved; and that he might be pleased to bless to us the fruits of the earth, and not to inflict upon us those scourges of his wrath, pestilence and war.

XXIV. *Of Ascension-Day.*

Q. Why was Ascension-Day instituted and set apart?

A. Forty days after his resurrection our blessed Saviour ascended with our human nature into heaven, and presented it to God, who placed it at his own right hand, and by his reception of those first fruits sanctioned the redemption of mankind. As a thankful acknowledgment of which, the church hath, from the beginning of christianity, set apart this day for its commemoration; and for the greater solemnity of it, our church, in particular, has selected such peculiar offices as are suitable to the occasion.

Q. How is Ascension day commonly called?

A. Holy Thursday, and was formerly considered as a high festival, though now too much overlooked, considering the great importance of our Lord's ascension.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For heavenly desires.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the lessons, epistle, and gospel?

A. That the first lesson for the morning, 2 Kings ii. contains the history of Elijah's being taken up into heaven, and of his conferring, at that time, a double portion of his spirit on Elisha, thereby exactly prefiguring our Saviour, who, after he was ascended, sent down the fulness of his Spirit upon his Apostles and disciples. The other lessons, (Deut. x. Luke xxiv. 44. Ephes. iv. to verse 17), epistle and gospel are very suitable to the day, and require no explanation.

XXV. *Of the Sunday after Ascension-Day.*

Q. Why was this week called Expectation-Week?

A. Because during this week the Apostles continued in earnest prayer and expectation of the Comforter, whom our blessed Saviour had graciously promised to send them.

Q. What is the design of the epistle and gospel?

A. The gospel contains the promise of the Comforter, who is the Spirit of Truth; and the epistle exhorts every one to make such use of those gifts which the Holy Spirit shall bestow upon them, as become good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

XXVI. *Of Whit-Sunday.*

Q. How ancient is the observation of this festival?

A. The feast of Pentecost was of great eminency among the Jews, in memory of the law delivered

on mount Sinai at that time; and of no less note among the Christians for the Holy Ghost's descending upon the Apostles and other Christians assembled at Jerusalem, in the visible appearance of fiery tongues, which happened on that day, and of those miraculous powers which were then conferred upon them. It was observed with the same respect to Easter as the Jewish Pentecost to their Passover, viz. as the word imports, just fifty days afterwards. Some conclude from St. Paul's earnest desire of being at Jerusalem at this time, (Acts xx. 16), that the observation of it, as a Christian festival, is as old as the Apostles: But whatever St. Paul's design was, we are assured that it has been universally observed from the very first ages of christianity.*

Q. Why was it so called?

A. It was styled Whit-Sunday, partly because of those vast effusions of light and knowledge which were then shed upon the Apostles, in order to the enlightening of the world; but principally from the white garments those were invested with, who, at this time, were baptized.†

Q. What is to be observed concerning the lessons, epistle and gospel?

A. That the first lesson for the morning (Deut. xvi. to v. 18) contains the law of the Jewish Pentecost, or feast of weeks, which was a type of ours. That the first lesson at evening (Isaiah xi.) is a prophecy of the conversion of the Gentiles to the kingdom of Christ, through the inspiration of the Apostles by the Spirit of God; the completion of which prophecy is recorded in both the second les-

* Vid. Just. Mart. Quæst. et Respons. ad Orthodox. 115.—Tert. de Idol. cap. xiv. p. 94. B.—De Coron. Mil. cap. iii. p. 102. A.—Orig. adv. Cels. Can 8. Part ii. p. 522. L.—In Numer. 31. Hom. 25. Part i. p. 169. A.

† The white garments were put on in token of the purity of life they had now engaged in, and were worn till the next Sunday.

sons, Acts x. verse 34, and chap. xix. to verse 21; but especially in the portion of scripture for the epistle, which contains a particular description of the first wonderful descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, who were assembled together in one place, in expectation of the blessed Spirit, according to the promise of our Saviour mentioned in the gospel.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For illumination, or a right judgment in all things, and the gift and comfort of the Holy Ghost.

XXVII. *Of the Monday and Tuesday in Whitsun-Week.*

Q. How was Whitsun-Week formerly observed?

A. The Whitsun-Week was not entirely a festival, like that of Easter; the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday having been observed as fasts and days of humiliation and supplication for a blessing upon the work of ordination, which was usually on the next Sabbath, imitating therein the apostolic practice mentioned Acts xiii. 3.* But the Monday and Tuesday were observed after the same manner, and for the same reasons, as in the Easter-Week.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistles and gospels?

A. The epistles for both days relate to the baptism of converts; this being, as we have already mentioned, one of the more solemn times appointed for baptism; and to their receiving the Holy Ghost by the hands of the Apostles; this being also a time for confirmation, which was always performed by the imposition of hands. The gospel for Monday seems to have been allotted for the instruction of the new baptized, teaching them to believe

* Athanas. Apolog. de fugâ suâ, § vi. tom. i. p. 328. Concil. Gerund. Can. 2. tom. iv. col. 1568. A.

in Christ, and to become the children of light. The gospel for Tuesday seems to be appointed in one of the Ember-weeks, for the design of putting a difference between those who are lawfully called, and those who arrogate to themselves the ministry of God's word and sacraments.

XXVIII. *Of Trinity Sunday.*

Q. How ancient is the observation of this feast?

A. In all the ancient liturgies we find that this day was considered only as an octave of Pentecost; the observation of it, as the feast of the Trinity, being of a later date. For since the praises of the Trinity were every day celebrated in the doxology, hymns and creeds, the church thought that there was no necessity to set apart one particular day for that which was done on each.* But afterwards, when the Arians and such like heretics were spread over the world, and had broached their blasphemies against this divine mystery, the wisdom of the church thought it convenient, that, though the blessed Trinity was daily celebrated in her public offices of devotion, yet, it should be the more solemn subject of one particular day's meditation.

Q. Why is it observed on the Sunday after Whit-Sunday?

A. The church chose this day as most seasonable; for no sooner had our Lord ascended into heaven, and the Holy Ghost descended upon the church, than there ensued the full revelation of the glorious and incomprehensible Trinity, which before that time was not so clearly known. The church, therefore, having dedicated the foregoing solemn festivals to the honour of each distinct person by himself, thereby celebrating the Unity in the Trinity, deemed it highly seasonable to conclude those so-

* Decretal. Greg. ix. L. Tit. ix. cap. ii. col. 596. Paris, 1601.

lemnities by adding to them one more festival to the honour and glory of the whole Trinity, therein celebrating the Trinity in the Unity.

Q. Was not this mystery revealed to the Jews as well as to the Christians?

A. Yes; the first chapter in the Bible sets forth three person in the Godhead; for besides the Spirit of God which moved upon the waters, (v. 2.) we find the great Creator (at the 26th verse) consulting with others about the greatest work of his creation, the making of man,* of whom we may be assured the Word or Son of God was one, since "all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made." John i. 3. So that these two verses pointing out to us the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, make this a very proper lesson for the solemnity of the day.—But this sacred mystery is no where so plainly manifested as in the second lesson for the morning, (Matt. iii. verse 16)† which, at one and the same time, relates the baptism of the Son, the voice of the Father, and the descent of the Holy Ghost; who, though they are, as appears from this chapter, as well as from the first lesson, three distinct persons in number, yet the first and second lesson at evening show they are but one in essence.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistle and gospel?

A. That they are the same that in ancient services were assigned for the octave of Whit-Sunday: the

* R. Samuel Bar Nahma saith, "When Moses, in writing the law, came to those words, *Let us make man*, &c. he cried out, Lord of the world, why dost thou give men occasion of mistaking in thy most simple Unity? And the Lord answered, Write thou, Moses; and let him that desires to mistake, mistake."

† "There the mystery of the Trinity was displayed. God the Father, by a voice from heaven; God the Son, in his human nature; and God the Holy Ghost, under the appearance of a dove." Collyer's Sacred Interpreter, vol. ii. p. 84.

gospel especially seems to be very proper for the season, as being the last day of baptism; though they are neither of them improper to the day as it is Trinity Sunday; for in both the epistle and gospel are mentioned the three persons of the blessed Trinity; and that noted hymn of the angels in heaven, mentioned in the portion of scripture appointed for the epistle, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, seems of itself to be of a sufficient manifestation of three persons, and but one God.

XXIX. *Of the Sundays from Trinity Sunday to Advent.*

Q. What is to be observed concerning the gospels from Trinity Sunday to Advent?

A. In the annual course of the gospels for Sundays and holy-days, the chief matter of the four Evangelists is collected in such order as the church thinks most convenient to make the deepest impression upon the congregation. The whole time from Advent to Trinity Sunday is chiefly taken up in commemorating the principal acts of providence in the great work of our redemption; and, therefore, such portions of scripture are appointed to be read as are deemed most suitable to the several solemnities, and most likely to enlighten our understandings, and confirm our faith in the mysteries we celebrate. But from Trinity Sunday to Advent, the gospels are not chosen as peculiarly proper to any particular Sunday, for this could be observed in the greater festivals only; but such passages are selected out of the Evangelists as are proper for our meditation at all times, and singularly conduce to our edification; such as are the holy doctrine, deeds and miracles of the blessed Jesus, who always went about doing good, and whom the church always proposes to our imitation.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistles?

A. That they all tend to the same end, being fre-

quent exhortations to an uninterrupted practice of all Christian virtues. They are all taken out of St. Paul's Epistles, and observe the very order, both of chapters and epistles, in which they stand in the New Testament, except those for the five first Sundays, that for the 18th, and the last for the 25th. Those for the five first Sundays are all, except that for the fourth, taken out of the Epistles of St. John and St. Peter; for which reason they are placed first, that they might not afterwards interrupt the order of those taken out of St. Paul's.

XXX. *Of St. Andrew's Day, November* 30.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate the 30th of November?

A. That of the Apostle St. Andrew, whom, for his greater honour, because he was the first that found the Messiah (John i. 38, 39, &c.) and the first that brought others to him, the church commemorates first in her anniversary course of holy days.

Q. Of what country and parentage was St. Andrew?

A. He was a native of Bethsaida, a city of Galilee, upon the banks of the lake of Gennesereth, son to John or Jonas, a fisherman of that town, and generally supposed to be the younger brother of Simon Peter.

Q. What became of St. Andrew after our Saviour's ascension?

A. The Apostles having determined by lot what parts of the world they should severally take, according to tradition, Sythia and the adjacent regions fell to St. Andrew; who, as Eusebius relates, after he had planted the gospel in several places, came to Patræ, in Achaia;* where, endeavouring to convert Ægas, the pro-consul, he was by that governor's orders first scourged, and then crucified. That

* Achaia was a province of Greece.

his death might be the more lingering, he was fastened to the cross not with nails, but with cords. The cross was in the form of the letter X; and is hence known by the name of St. Andrew's cross. The year of his death is uncertain, though Mereri says it happened A. D. 69. St. Andrew has left no writings; for which reason we are at a loss to judge of his spirit and endearments. It is affirmed by ecclesiastical writers, that when this Apostle was brought to the cross, he embraced it with great fervour, esteeming it a singular honour to suffer like his Master.

Q. What should we learn from the observation of this festival?

A. That as St. Andrew forsook all his worldly interest to follow Christ, so should we forsake all sinful pursuits and pleasures to follow the same blessed Redeemer, whose service leads to present peace and future felicity.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. She prays to Almighty God for grace, that we may as readily obey the good motions impressed on our hearts by the gospel of his Son, and keep his commandments, as St. Andrew obeyed the call of Christ.

Q. What are we taught in the epistle?

A. That the public profession of christianity was as necessary to the first converts, as the belief of Christ in the heart; and by a regular induction of consequences, it lays down the necessity of preaching committed to the Apostles. It then accounts for the general unbelief of the Jewish nation, by several striking prophecies from their own sacred books, very applicable to that stubborn people.

Q. Why was this portion of scripture, Matt. iv. 5. *chosen for the gospel on this day?*

A. Because it is a narrative of St. Andrew's conversion.

XXXI. *Of St. Thomas the Apostle, December* 21.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of the Apostle St. Thomas, which seems to be placed next, not because he was the second who believed Jesus to be the Messiah, but the last that believed his resurrection; of which, though he was at first most doubtful, yet he had afterwards the greatest evidence of its truth,* which the church recommends to our meditation at this season, as a fit preparation to our Lord's nativity.

Q. What was he called besides Thomas?

A. Didymus, which in Greek signifies a *twin*, as Thomas does in Hebrew.

Q. Of what country and kindred was this Apostle?

A. The history of the gospel takes no particular notice of either. That he was a Jew is certain, and probably a Galilean; and it is very likely with respect to his occupation, that he was a fisherman; for when St. Peter, after our Saviour's resurrection, thought fit to return to his former profession of fishing, to relieve his present necessities, Thomas accompanied him.

Q. What became of him after this?

A. It is uncertain; though it is generally believed that he preached the gospel, and suffered martyrdom in the Indies. There are at Malabar Christians to this day, who are called Christians of St. Thomas.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For such a measure of faith, in the fundamental articles of our holy religion, as may, by a suitable practice, make our lives irreprovable.

* The ancient Fathers say of St. Thomas, that "his doubt did more service than all the other Apostles' faith;" for it occasioned our Saviour to give the most convincing proof of his being risen from the dead, and consequently it confirmed this truth beyond all question.

Q. What is contained in the epistle?

A. It contains, in a noble and just allegory, a description of our Christian privileges, and communion with the Prophets and Apostles under Jesus Christ, as the head of the faithful.

XXXII. *Of St. Stephen's Day, December* 26.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Stephen, who is the first of those innumerable martyrs that have since shed their blood for Jesus Christ; which, according to the testimony of several very ancient writers, was celebrated in the primitive times.

Q. Of what country and kindred was this holy man?

A. In these particulars the scripture is silent; however, it is probable that he was of the number of those helenistical Jews who believed in Jesus Christ, and was appointed head or chief of the seven deacons who were chosen in the year 53.

Q. What character does the scripture give of St. Stephen?

A. That he was a man "full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost."

Q. What became of this eminent disciple of Christ?

A. After having performed many miracles, and steadfastly defending the faith of Christ, he was cruelly put to death by the Jews. His body was buried by devout men; who, from a sense of the loss of so pious and good a man, made great lamentation for him. The charity he expressed for his executioners in the very act of his martyrdom, shows him to have been the true disciple of his divine Master. He had reprehended his enemies with some degree of severity, but that severity was inspired by the love he bore them. He reproached their incredulity with zeal, but without bitterness. He was a dove, says St. Austin, whose anger had no gall. If he was strong in expression, it was to break the

hardness of their hearts. At the same time that he glowed with zeal for their salvation, he offered up his blood to God for those who spilt it.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For support under sufferings, and for grace to love and bless our persecutors, after the example of St. Stephen.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistle and gospel?

A. That they are very proper to the occasion: the epistle gives us an account of St. Stephen's martyrdom; and the gospel assures us, that his blood, and the blood of all those who have suffered for the name of Christ, shall be required at the hands of those who shed it.

XXXIII. *Of St. John the Evangelist's Day, December 27.*

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. John the Evangelist, which is a feast of very great antiquity, as the primitive Fathers assure us; and Maximus Taurinensis has a homily upon it, about the year of our Lord 400.

Q. What was St. John's original?

A. He was a native of Bethsaida, in Galilee, son of Zebedee and Salome, and by profession a fisherman.

Q. Where did St. John preach the gospel after our Saviour's death?

A. In Asia, residing chiefly in Ephesus; from thence he was sent bound to Rome, where, at the command of the tyrant Domitian, who had waged war against the church in the thirteenth year of his reign, he was cast into a caldron of boiling oil. But the God who preserved the three children in the midst of the fiery furnace, brought the Apostle out of the caldron unhurt. The emperor, however, not at all moved by this miraculous deliverance, banish-

ed the holy man to a wretched and comfortless island, called Patmos, in the Ægean sea, where he saw heaven opened, and beheld those glorious visions recorded in the book of Revelation. Upon the death of the emperor Domitian, many of his cruel edicts were revoked by his successor; when St. John, taking advantage of the indulgence, returned to Ephesus; and finding Timothy, the bishop of that church martyred, he took upon himself the government of it, till, in a good old age of about an hundred years, he most willingly resigned his meek and gentle spirit into the hands of his Lord and Saviour, to experience the fulness of his love, and possess the glories he had so often contemplated; which put a period to the apostolic age.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For grace to live according to the doctrine which St. John taught. So shall we be Christians in word and deed; so shall we be true followers of the saint of this day; so shall we be the disciples whom Jesus will love.

Q. Whence are the epistle and gospel for St. John's day taken?

A. They are taken out of his own writings, and aptly answer to one another; the epistle contains St. John's testimony of Christ, and the gospel Christ's testimony of St. John: the gospel seems applicable to the day, as it commemorates this Evangelist; but the epistle appears to be chosen on account of its being an attendant on a more solemn festival, that of Christ's nativity.

XXXIV. *Of the Innocents' Day, December* 28.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. The martyrdom of the holy *Innocents*, which is mentioned by Origen, as what was by the holy Fathers celebrated in the church from the earliest ages.

Q. Is there any account of the number of the children who were put to death by Herod in Bethlehem?

A. The scripture gives none; but it is asserted by historians that fourteen thousand fell in this bloody massacre, and that Judah's streams ran in infant blood. The Greek church, in their calendar, and the Abyssins, in their office for the day, commemorate the same number. Macrobius says, that the tyrant, to make sure work, also slew his own son among the rest: which unnatural brutality, as Drasius relates from the same Macrobius, occasioned the emperor Augustus, when he heard of it, to say, "That he had rather be Herod's hog than his son." For the religion of his nation was a security for swine, but no religion could be any security for his child.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this festival?

A. For grace to glorify God by the innocency of our lives, and the constancy of our faith, even unto death.

Q. What is contained in the epistle and gospel?

A. The gospel contains the history of this bloody massacre; and instead of a portion out of the epistles, is read part of the 13th chapter of the book of Revelation, showing, for our encouragement, the glorious state of those and such like innocents in heaven.

"Hail ye first flowers of the evangelical spring, cut off by the sword of persecution, ere yet you had unfolded your leaves to the morning, as the early rose drops before the withering blasts. Driven, like a flock of lambs to the slaughter, you have the honour to compose the first sacrifice offered at the altar of Christ; before which methinks I see your innocent simplicity sporting with the palms and crowns held out to you from above."

XXXV. *Of the Conversion of St. Paul, January 25.*

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Paul, who is not commemorated, as the other Apostles are, by his death or martyrdom, but by his conversion; because, as it was wonderful in itself, so it was highly beneficial to the church of Christ: for while other Apostles had their particular provinces, he had the care of all the churches, and by his indefatigable labours contributed very much to the propagation of the gospel throughout the world.

Q. By what names is this Apostle described in scripture?

A. By two, Saul and Paul; the one Hebrew, relating to his Jewish original, he being of the tribe of Benjamin, among whom that name was famous ever since the first king of Israel, Saul, was chosen out of that tribe; the other Latin, referring to the Roman corporation where St. Paul was born; or, as some think, in memory of his converting Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor; though others are of opinion that it was assumed by him after his conversion, as an act of humility, styling himself less than the least of all saints; for Paulus in Latin signifies *a little one.*

Q. Where was St. Paul born?

A. He was a native of Tarsus in Silicia, a Pharisee by profession, and a Roman citizen by privilege. He was a pupil of the great Gamaliel, and became remarkable for learning and eloquence. At first he was a persecutor of the church, but being miraculously converted to christianity, he became a zealous and faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.

Q. Where did St. Paul preach the gospel?

A. At Jerusalem; and from Jerusalem through Arabia, Asia, Greece, round about to Illyricum, to Rome, and even to the bounds of what was then called the western world.

Q. What was the manner of his death, and where did it happen?

A. He was beheaded at the command of Nero, in that general persecution under his reign, raised against the Christians on pretence that they fired Rome. The place where he suffered martyrdom was called the *Salvian Waters*, about three miles from the city. His death happened in the sixty-sixth year of our Lord, and sixty-eight of his age.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For true thankfulness for St. Paul's conversion, and that the gospel which he preached might be a pattern to us, both of a perfect doctrine and exemplary life.

Q. What is contained in that part of scripture chosen for the epistle?

A. It contains a full and particular account of the persecution carried on against the Christians by St. Paul, likewise of his miraculous conversion and baptism by Annanias, with its immediate consequences in his preaching the gospel.

XXXVI. *Of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, February 2.*

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. The presentation of Christ in the temple, commonly called the Purification of the blessed Virgin Mary; a festival of very great antiquity in the Christian church: It is mentioned by Methodius, bishop of Tyre, who has a homily upon it, and who flourished in the third century.

Q. What is meant by the purification?

A. It was a Jewish ceremony, ordained by the law of Moses, by which all their women were obliged to separate themselves from the public congregation forty days after the birth of a male child, and eighty after the birth of a female; and when that time was expired, they were to go to the temple

and offer a lamb, with a young pigeon or turtle; or, if they were poor, two pigeons or two turtles.

Q. What may we learn from Christ's being presented in the temple?

A. To dedicate the vigour of our youth, and the flower of our days, to the practice of religion and virtue.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. It prays, that as our Saviour was presented to God in the temple, while he was yet an infant, so we may be presented before him with pure hearts, and clear consciences, through the mediation of his only Son our Lord.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistle and gospel?

A. That they are very suitable to the day. The scripture for the epistle is a prophetical representation of John the Baptist's ministry, as preparatory to that of the gospel, and a sublime description of the effects which the gospel itself should have in the reformation of mankind. The gospel sets before us those transactions which we commemorate in the service of this day, and contains matters worthy of our serious meditation.

XXXVII. *Of St. Matthias' Day, February* 24.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Matthias, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, who was chosen to supply the vacancy made by the treachery of Judas Iscariot; and who was probably one of the seventy disciples.

Q. Where did this Apostle preach the gospel and suffer martyrdom?

A. He continued at Jerusalem till the powers of the Holy Ghost were conferred on the Apostles, to enable them to discharge their difficult employment; and then he is thought to have preached in Judea for some time with great success; and afterwards,

travelling eastwards, he fixed his residence near the irruption of the river Apsarus, and the port of Hypsus in Colchis. Among these barbarous people he obtained the crown of martyrdom, but by what death is not certainly known.

Q. What do we pray for in the collect for this day?

A. That the church may be kept free from false teachers, in which we cannot join too heartily, seeing how many are tempted, through the love of money, to betray the gospel committed to their charge, as Judas betrayed Christ.

Q. What does the portion of scripture chosen for the epistle contain?

A. A full and particular narrative of Peter's exhortation to the faithful, that they would supply the place of Judas with one out of their body; where it is remarkable that he applies the words of David in Psalm cix. to Judas.

Q. What does the gospel contain?

A. A part of our Lord's discourse to his followers, where he blesses God for revealing the secrets of his gospel dispensation to plain and well-meaning people, and hiding* them from the learned; concluding with an exhortation to such as are sensible of the tyranny which they suffer under the dominion of their corrupt passions and appetites, that they would have recourse to his doctrine, and experience its salutary effects, in releasing them from this more than Egyptian bondage.

XXXVIII. *Of the Annunciation of the blessed Virgin Mary, March* 25.

Q. What is meant by the annunciation of the blessed Virgin, which the church this day celebrates?

* God is said to do things, when, in the course of his providence, he permits them to come to pass; so that to hide the gospel from the wise and prudent, was to suffer them to hide it from themselves, by refusing to receive it.

A. The declaration which the angel Gabriel made to the blessed Virgin Mary, that she should be the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ; that this her Son should be "great, and be called the Son of the Highest; that the Lord God should give unto him the throne of his father David; and that he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and that of his kingdom there should be no end." Isaiah ix. 6, 7.

Q. Hath this festival a relation only to the blessed Virgin Mary?

A. No; it hath also a particular respect to the incarnation of our blessed Saviour; who being the eternal word of the Father, was at that time made flesh. And thus, this festival is by St. Athenasius considered as one of the chief that relate to our Lord, whether we regard the order and method of those things which the Evangelists declare concerning our Saviour, or the profound mystery we this day celebrate.

Q. When is the Virgin Mary supposed to have died?

A. In the year of Christ 48, aged sixty-eight; she is said to have been about twenty years old when our Saviour was born, and to have lived fifteen years after his ascension into heaven.

Q. What do we pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For grace, that as we acknowledge the humiliation of our Saviour, in taking our nature upon him, and the sufferings he underwent in consequence of that self-abasement, so we may follow his blessed example, and be partakers with him of a glorious resurrection.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the scripture chosen for the epistle?

A. That a more direct prophecy could not have been selected for the confirmation of those gospel truths which are the subject of this day's meditation.

Q. And what is to be observed concerning the gospel?

A. That it is very suitable to the solemnity.—St.

Luke is the only Evangelist who has favoured us with a continued narrative of Christ's immaculate conception, and what happened to his mother Mary, both then and afterwards, till his birth at Bethlehem; it was therefore more proper on this festival to select the gospel from his writings than from the writings of any other Evangelist.

XXXIX. *Of St. Mark's Day, April 25.*

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of the Evangelist St. Mark,* who is generally agreed to have been the disciple and interpreter of St. Peter, and to have written his gospel under that Apostle's direction; though others suppose that he was one of the seventy disciples before he joined himself to Peter.

Q. What account have we of the life and death of this Evangelist?

A. Very little is known concerning either; probably he was, by birth, a Jew, descended of the tribe of Levi; and some report, that being sent by St. Peter to preach the gospel in Egypt, he suffered martyrdom at Alexandria, in the year of Christ 68.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For stability in believing the doctrines which St. Mark hath taught us, and that we may continue in our duty without fluctuation.

Q. What does the epistle contain?

* This Evangelist is very improperly confounded with a person who is sometimes called John-Mark, and, at other times, simply Mark or John; and who was the cousin and disciple of Barnabas, and the son of a Christian woman called Mary, at whose house, in Jerusalem, the faithful and Apostles generally met. What part he bore in the propagation of the gospel, the Acts of the Apostles inform us. The Greeks give him the title of Apostle, and say that the sick were healed by his shadow. Some make him the Bishop of Biblis, in Phœnicia; but others, with more probability, report that he died at Ephesus.

A. It contains, in the first place, an elegant description of Christ's ascension into heaven, as it is a completion of that prophecy, in the 58th Psalm, verse 18; and then it applies the prediction, by enumerating those powers committed to the first Christians, for the promulgation and establishment of the gospel, with the peculiar tendency of those to advance the great end proposed, by uniting the faithful as one body in mutual charity, under their head Christ Jesus.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the gospel?

A. That it is a most heavenly discourse of our Saviour, where, under an allusion of a vine, he describes the close union between him and the faithful, considering himself as the stock, and them as the branches; intimating the necessity of their abiding in his doctrine, and forwarding his designs by a suitable practice, which could only be done by continuing in mutual charity; that as he was united to God, by keeping his commandments, so they might be united with him by the love which they bore to each other.

XL. *Of St. Philip and St. James' Day, May* 1.

Q. What festival doth the church celebrate this day?

A. That of the two Apostles, St. Philip and St. James.

Q. Where was St. Philip born?

A. He was a native of Bethsaida, and called to the apostleship at the beginning of our Saviour's mission. Eusebius says he was a married man, and had several daughters.

Q. Where did this Apostle preach the gospel?

A. In Upper Asia, where, taking great pains to propagate the faith of Christ, he made many converts. In the latter part of his life he came to Hierapolis, a rich and populous city in Phrygia, which was very much addicted to idolatry, and particularly

to the worship of a serpent or dragon of a prodigious size.

Q. Where did he suffer martyrdom?

A. At this city of Hierapolis; for the magistrates, being provoked at the success of christianity among the people, put St. Philip into prison, caused him to be severely scourged, and then led to execution; where he was, as some say, hanged up by the neck against a pillar, though others affirm he was crucified; but their malice being glutted with his death, they suffered his constant companion, St. Bartholomew, to give the corpse a decent burial.

Q. What account have we of St. James?

A. That he was the son of Cleophas, otherwise called Alpheus, and Mary, a near relation of the blessed Virgin. He is styled, in scripture, *our Lord's brother*;* and, by Josephus, *the brother of Jesus Christ.* He was surnamed *the Less*, to distinguish him from the other St. James, either from the stature of his body, or the difference of his age; and *the Just*, for the admirable holiness and purity of his life. He was constituted bishop of Jerusalem, at which place he suffered martyrdom, during the feast of the Passover. This St. James was a person of great authority among the Apostles; for, in the council which met at Jerusalem to decide the dispute necessary to circumcision, we find him sitting as President, summing up the debate, and wording the decree.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For grace that we may experimentally know the truth, as it is taught in the gospel; and imitate the example of these blessed Apostles, whose festival we now celebrate.

Q. What is contained in the epistle?

A. An address to all the true Israelites without

* That is, our Lord's cousin; for in scripture, the word brother is often used to express that relation.

distinction, to suffer with patience, to be instant in prayer, to hope for the best, and to be humble, acknowledging the divine goodness both in prosperity and adversity, accounting those blessed who, with firmness and perseverance in the course of their duty, bear temptations like good Christians.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the gospel?

A. That as the epistle was chosen on account of its being written by St. James, the gospel is manifestly selected for the share St. Philip bore in the conference which Christ had with his disciples, concerning the intimate union between him and his heavenly Father.

XLI. *Of St. Barnabas the Apostle, June* 11.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Barnabas, a disciple of Jesus Christ, and for some time a companion of St. Paul in his apostolic labours.

Q. What was his original?

A. He was a native of Cyprus, and descended of the tribe of Levi; but his kindred are not known.

Q. What was the proper name of this disciple?

A. Joses, a softer termination, familiar with the Greeks, for Joseph; to which, after his conversion to christianity, the Apostles added that of Barnabas, signifying either the *son of prophecy*, or *the son of consolation;* the first respecting his eminent prophetic gifts, for we are told, Acts ii. 24, that Barnabas was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost; the other his extensive charity, in selling his estate for the comfort and relief of the poor Christians, he being the first who sold an estate, and placed the purchase-money in a common fund, then applied to that purpose.

Q. Where was St. Barnabas educated?

A. At Jerusalem, under Gamaliel, an eminent doctor of the law. St. Barnabas was a great master of the Greek, which was the current language of

Antioch, and which was probably one reason why the Apostles were particularly induced to send him to that place to preach the gospel, as mentioned in Acts ii. 22.

Q. When was he converted?

A. It is not known, but he is generally esteemed to be one of the seventy disciples chosen by our Saviour.

Q. What became of him after his separation from St. Paul? (Acts xv. 36.)

A. He is said to have gone into Italy, preached at Rome, and founded a church at Milan; though it is most probable he spent the remainder of his life at Cyprus, in converting his own countrymen, the Jews; as may be conjectured from the epistle he wrote, which seems manifestly designed for their benefit.

Q. Where did he suffer martyrdom?

A. At Salamis, it is said, whither some Jews being come out of Syria, set upon him, as he was disputing in their synagogue, and stoned him to death.

Q. By whom was he buried?

A. By his kinsman Mark, in a cave not far distant from the city.

Q. What do we pray for in the collect for this day?

A. That it would please Almighty God, the giver of all good things, not to leave us destitute, but of his great mercy to inspire pious sentiments into our hearts, and to teach us the proper use of his gifts and graces, by rendering them conducive to the reformation of our lives, and the good example of others.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the portion of scripture for the epistle?

A. That this part of St. Barnabas' history in the Acts is plainly chosen with a reference to the day; but the subjects contained in the narrative are very interesting, as we learn from thence the gradual progress and establishment of christianity.

Q. What is contained in the gospel?

A. A pathetic exhortation to mutual love, delivered by Christ to his disciples, from the consideration of the love which he was going to testify to them, in suffering death for their sakes. The argument is further enforced by the joint friendship he professes for them all; in which we have an amiable picture of tenderness and familiarity, no way derogatory to the dignity of a master towards his disciples.

XLII. *Of St. John Baptist's Day, June* 24.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. The nativity of St. John Baptist, by reason of the wonderful circumstances of it, and on account of the great joy it brought to all those who expected the Messiah. There was formerly another day, viz. August 26, set apart in commemoration of his being beheaded. But now the church celebrates both his nativity and death on one and the same day; whereon, though his mysterious birth is principally solemnized, yet the chief passages of his life and death are severally recorded in the portion of scripture appointed for the day.

Q. What account have we of the life and death of this holy man?

A. That he was the son of Zachariah and Elizabeth, and born about six months before our Saviour. That his birth was proclaimed by the angel Gabriel, (Luke i. 14, &c.) and that he was so greatly esteemed for the virtue and piety of his life, that many of the Jews took him for the Messiah; but he plainly declared he was not (Luke iii. 15.) And, lastly, that having prepared the way for the coming of the Messiah, he was cruelly put to death by the command of Herod Antipas, at the instigation of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom this prince had unjustly taken and married.

Q. What character does Josephus give of John the Baptist?

A. That he was "a man endued with all virtue, who exhorted the Jews to the practice of justice towards men and piety towards God; and also to baptism, which would become acceptable to God if they renounced their sins, and to the cleanness of their bodies added the purity of their souls."

Q. What does the name John, *given him by the angel, signify?*

A. The gift of God.

XLIII. *Of St. Peter's Day, June* 29.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Peter the Apostle.

Q. Of what kindred, country, and occupation was St. Peter?

A. He was the son of John, or Jonas, or Joanna, and brother of Andrew; born at Bethsaida, and by profession a fisherman.

Q. What was his proper name?

A. Simon, or Simeon; but when our Saviour called him to the apostleship, he changed it into Cephas, that is, in Syriac, a *stone* or a rock; in Greek and Latin, *Petra*, whence Peter.

Q. What became of this Apostle after our Saviour's ascension?

A. He continued very zealous and constant in his Master's service, till he was crowned with martyrdom at Rome, in the year 66, where he was taken up and thrown into prison, and continued there nine months; at last he was crucified in the *Via Ostia*, with his head downwards, as he himself had desired of his executioners. This he did out of a sense of humility, lest it should be thought, as St. Ambrose says, that he affected the glory of Jesus Christ.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. That it would please God to make ministers diligent in the discharge of their pastoral functions; and that their respective congregations may be obedient followers of the important truths, which they shall so frequently declare in the course of their ministry; that, through Christ, they may all hereafter receive a glorious reward.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the portion of scripture for the epistle?

A. That it is wholly chosen in respect of the day.

XLIV. *Of St. James the Apostle, July 25.*

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. James the Apostle, commonly called the *great* or *elder*, to distinguish him from St. James the *less* or *younger*.

Q. What account have we of his parentage?

A. That he was the son of Zebedee; his mother's name was Mary, surnamed Salome, the daughter of Cleophas, and sister, or rather cousin-german, to Mary the mother of our Lord; so that he had the honour of being a near relation to Christ himself.

Q. What became of St. James after our Saviour's ascension?

A. We have no account from sacred history what became of him. Sophronius tells us, that he preached to the dispersed Jews, that is, to those converts who were dispersed after the death of St. Stephen; so also St. Jerome observes; though we have no authentic account that his labours carried him out of Judea, or even Jerusalem. Some Spanish writers mention, that after preaching the gospel in several parts of Judea and Samaria, he visited Spain, in which he planted christianity, and appointed some select desciples to perfect what he had begun.

Q. How did he suffer martyrdom?

A. Herod Agrippa, being desirous upon his en-

trance into government to ingratiate himself with the Jews, caused St. James to be apprehended at Jerusalem, and commanded that he should be beheaded, in the year of Christ 44. And thus he became the first Apostle who laid down his life for the testimony of Jesus.

Q. What do we pray for in the collect for this day?

A. That God of his mercy would dispose us, after the example of St. James, cheerfully to embrace the conditions of the gospel, and to prefer it before all things.

Q. Why was the portion of scripture for the epistle chosen out of the Acts?

A. Because of the account it gives concerning St. James' martyrdom.

Q. What does the gospel contain?

A. It contains the ambitious request of Salome, the mother of James and John, which Christ patiently hears; and having shown the unreasonableness of it, he points out that real superiority among Christians, humility, and readiness to serve their brethren, which they should, at all times, aspire after.

XLV. *Of St. Bartholomew the Apostle, Aug.* 24.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Bartholomew, one of the twelve Apostles, supposed to be the same with Nathanael, one of the first disciples who came to Christ, and whose conversion is related in the Gospel of John, chap. i. 45, 46, &c.

Q. What account have we of the life and death of this Apostle?

A. Very little is known respecting him, though some of the ancients tell us he was a native of Cana, and well skilled in the law of Moses. He is thought to have travelled into India, and from thence to have

returned into Asia, and preached to the people of Hierapolis, in Lycaonia; and, lastly, at Albania, a city on the Caspian sea, where his endeavours to reclaim the people from idolatry were crowned with martyrdom; he being, according to some writers, first flayed alive, and then crucified with his head downwards.

Q. What doth the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For that faith which the Apostle St. Bartholomew continued steadfastly to profess, even to martyrdom; beseeching of God to grant us the same firmness and patience in expectation of his promises.

Q. What do we learn from the gospel?

A. That the extraordinary powers committed to Christ's Apostles, required them, above all things, to be affable and humble, as otherwise they might soon defeat the ends of their ministry; for which reason our Saviour took all necessary precautions to discountenance ambition, and to encourage the opposite virtues of humility, and a readiness to serve others on all occasions.

XLVI. *Of St. Matthew the Apostle, September* 21.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Matthew, otherwise called Levi, the Apostle and Evangelist, son of Alpheus, a Galilean by birth, a Jew by religion, and a publican by profession. He was called by our Saviour to follow him while sitting at the receipt of custom, which call he obeyed, quitting his profession and his goods, and ever after continued his faithful disciple.

Q. What was the time, place, and manner of this Apostle's death?

A. They are not clearly known. Some say he preached and died in Ethiopia, others among the Parthians, while Clemens Alexandrinus supposes he died a natural death.

Q. What are we directed to pray for in the collect for this day?

A. That God would dispose us to avoid all covetousness and inordinate affections, and to follow the doctrines of Christ laid down in his gospel.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistle?

A. That it is a very free and spirited declaration, both concerning the nature of that ministry which the Apostles exercised, and the reason why it is rejected by some, with the character of such as obstinately refuse to receive instruction.

XLVII. *Of St. Michael and All Angels, Sept.* 29.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Michael and All Angels, to express her thankfulness to God for the many benefits she hath received by their ministry, and because St. Michael is recorded in scripture as an angel of great power and dignity, presiding and watching over the Church of God, with a peculiar vigilence and application (Dan. x. 13), and triumphing over the power and malice of the devil (Rev. xii. 7, Jude 9); it therefore bears his name. The literal meaning of Michael is—*Who is like unto God?*—The Angels are spirits employed by God in human affairs, and are frequently mentioned in the Old and New Testament.

Q. What does the collect for this day teach us?

A. To admire God's wonderful providence in the order of nature, whereby, as angels serve God in their courses above, we may be assisted and protected by their ministry here below; so that nothing may hinder or discourage us in the daily performance of our duty.

Q. What is to be observed concerning that part of the Revelation which is chosen for the epistle?

A. That it is manifestly a prophecy, wherein the severe conflict, future triumph, and final happiness of the faithful are exhibited in the sublimest imagery that the whole extent of the universe could

furnish; for St. John having risen in this book to the utmost limits of the prophetical spirit, his style is proportionably symbolical.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the gospel?

A. That no part of scripture could be more properly chosen than that which is selected for the service of this day; especially as it commemorates the benefits we receive from the ministry of angels. And if we attend to the nature of the question proposed to our Saviour in the gospel, and his answer, with his whole argument in support of it, there is reason to conclude, that power among the angelical societies is the natural result of humility, and that the most potent are the most gentle, seeking no honour but that of being serviceable to others; which must give us an exalted idea of their mutual happiness, and a desire to imitate such kind, humble, and beneficent spirits, that we may be prepared for their society in the resurrection of life everlasting.

XLVIII. *Of St. Luke the Evangelist, October* 18.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of St. Luke the Evangelist, whom some ancient writers call Lucas, Luccas, or Lucanus.

Q. What account have we of the life and death of this holy man?

A. That he was a Syrian, a native of Antioch, and had the advantage of a liberal education, being a physician by profession, and, as some say, a painter. He was probably converted by St. Paul, at Antioch, to whom he was a constant companion in the several journies which that Apostle took to propagate the faith; and under his direction St. Luke wrote his gospel. Accounts differ as to the countries where he preached, and likewise concerning his death, though it is generally supposed that he suffered martyrdom in Greece, by a tumultuous

rabble, who, without any process, hanged him on an olive tree.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. That the diseases of our souls may be healed by the wholesome medicines of the doctrines delivered by St. Luke.

" In Luke Heaven's choicest gifts united shine,
" The learn'd physician, and the inspir'd divine;
" Blest art! which the balms of life supply;
" But that more blest, by which we learn to die."

Q. What is to be observed concerning the epistle?

A. That it seems to be chosen for the mention made of St. Luke in it; but it is proper for the day, exclusive of this circumstance, as he was very diligent in the work of an Evangelist here laid down.

Q. What does the gospel give an account of?

A. Of Christ's choosing and commissioning seventy other disciples besides the twelve Apostles, to preach the glad tidings of salvation, which is peculiar to St. Luke's narrative.

XLIX. *Of St. Simon and St. Jude, October* 28.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of the Apostles St. Simon and St. Jude.

Q. Why was St. Simon called the Canaanite?

A. This sirname has given occasion to several conjectures. Some say he was so called from Cana, a city in Galilee; and for that reason they contend that he was born there. But St. Luke, styling him Simon Zealotes, or the Zealot, plainly shows that the word Canaanite descends from the Hebrew *Kana*, which signifies to be zealous, and denotes his ardent temper.

Q. What became of St. Simon after our Lord's ascension?

A. The particulars of his life are not known; though some affirm, that when the Apostles dis-

persed to preach the gospel, he travelled into Egypt, Cyrenne, and Africa, passing on to Lybia and Mauritania, where he confirmed his doctrine by a number of miracles. That he came at last to the western islands, and visited England in particular; where, having converted many to the Christian faith, he was persecuted by the idolatrous inhabitants; and, lastly, crucified; all which he underwent with firmness and constancy.

Q. Of what descent and parentage was St. Jude?

A. He was of Christ's kindred, being brother to James the less, the first bishop of Jerusalem, and son, as is supposed, to Mary, the sister of the blessed Virgin;* he styled himself the *brother of Jesus Christ.*

Q. What was this Apostle called besides Jude?

A. Thaddeus and Lebbeus, to distinguish him from Judas the traitor: The names import *zeal* and *alacrity* in the service of God.

Q. What account have we of St. Jude after our Saviour's ascension?

A. The particulars of this holy man's life are not known with any certainty; though some writers affirm that he converted Abgarus, the king of Edessa, and many of his people, by his preaching and miracles; that he went up and down Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Idumea, and Mesopotamia, taking Arabia, and Syria in his way. He is also said to have suffered martyrdom at last in Persia, for exposing the superstitions of the Magi.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For grace, that we may be joined together in unity of spirit, by the doctrine of the Apostles.

* It was no unusual thing among the Jews to have more children than one called by the same name.

L. *Of All-Saints' Day, November* 1.

Q. What festival does the church celebrate this day?

A. That of All-Saints, which is a feast of no very great antiquity. About the year of our Lord 610, the Pantheon, or temple dedicated to all the gods, at the desire of Bonaface IV. bishop of Rome, was taken from the heathen by Phocas the emperor, and dedicated to the honour of all martyrs. Hence the original of All-Saints, which was then celebrated on the first of May. Afterwards, by an order of Gregory IV. it was removed to the first of November, in the year of our Lord 834, where it hath stood ever since. And the venerable compilers of our liturgy having rejected the celebration of a great many martyrs' days, which had grown too numerous and burthensome to the church, thought fit to retain this day, whereon the church, by a general commemoration, returns her thanks to God for them unitedly.

Q. What does the church pray for in the collect for this day?

A. For grace to follow the blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, so that we may come to those unspeakable joys which God hath prepared for them that love him.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the portion of scripture which is chosen for the epistle?

A. That this part of the Revelation, so chosen, has a peculiar propriety with respect to the festival which is celebrated on this day, not only in the conclusion, but likewise in the list of those who were sealed; for in the allegorical style, which St. John uses, other things are to be understood than what are contained in the letter of scripture; whence it is common to apply what is said of the Jews or Jerusalem to different states of the Christian church, as may be warranted by St. Paul's explication of the two covenants in Galations, chap. iv. 24, to the

end. This consideration may likewise account for the tribe of Dan's being omitted, and that of Manasseh inserted, as well as the order in which they are recited, contrary to that of their birth.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the gospel?

A. That nothing could have better suited the service of the day than this choice; where Christ pronounces those happy who are humble, modest, meek, and considerate; rather expressing a sorrowful concern for their own sins and those of the community to which they belong, than indulging themselves in mirth and extravagance; who are lovers of truth and justice, equitable, merciful, pure, and patient; endeavouring to promote peace and good neighbourhood; bearing with the reproaches and persecutions to which they are exposed; who speak the truth, and serve God conscientiously.

CHAPTER VI.

Of the Order for the Administration of the Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion.

1 CORINTHIANS xi. 23, 24, 25, 26.

For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread, &c.

I. *Of the Communion in general.*

Q. WHAT *is the virtue of the whole eucharist?*

A. Whatever benefits we now enjoy, or hope hereafter to receive from Almighty God, they are all purchased by the death, and must be obtained through the intercession of the holy Jesus. We are, therefore, taught not only to mention his name

continually in our prayers, but are also commanded, by visible signs, to represent and show forth to his heavenly Father his all-sufficient and meritorious death and sacrifice, as a more powerful way of interceding, and obtaining the divine acceptance; so that what we more compendiously express in that general conclusion of our prayers, *through Jesus Christ our Lord*, we more fully and forcibly represent in the celebration of the holy eucharist; wherein we intercede on earth, in conjunction with our High Priest in heaven, and plead the virtue and merits of the same sacrifice here which he is continually urging for us there. Because of this near alliance between praying and communicating, we find the eucharist was always, in the purest ages of the church, a daily part of the public services. And, therefore, though the shameful neglect of religion with us has made the imitation of this example to be rather wished for than expected, yet it shows us what excellent reason our church had to annex so much of this office to the usual service on all solemn days.

Q. What was the primitive form of administration?

A. As to the primitive and original form of administration, since it does not appear that our Saviour prescribed any particular method, it was various in divers churches; only all agreed in using the Lord's prayer, and in reciting the words of the institution of this sacrament, which some think was all that the Apostles used. But afterwards their successors in their several churches added a number of other forms; most of which, though with some corruptions, are still extant; and yet notwithstanding these, St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, and St. Ambrose, did each of them compile a distinct liturgy for his own church. And the excellent compilers of our common prayer have used the same freedom, extracting the purest and rejecting the counterfeit parts out of the former, and so have completed this

model, with so exact a judgment and happy success, that it is hard to determine whether they more endeavoured the advancement of devotion, or the imitation of pure antiquity: for we may safely affirm, that it is more primitive in all its parts, and better adapted to assist us in worthily receiving, than any other liturgy now used in the world. The style is plain and animating; the phrase is that of the most genuine Fathers; and the whole composition very pious and proper to represent, and give efficacy to the performance of the duty.

II. *Of the Rubrics before the Communion Office.*

Q. What is the design of the first and second rubric?

A. To prevent the minister from giving the communion to any who are open and notorious evil livers, or between whom he perceives malice or hatred; by which prudent restraint the church, doubtless, intends not barely to punish the offender, but also to keep him from adding to his sins by an unworthy reception of this sacrament.

Q. How does it appear that this is no novel or unnecessary power?

A. It is plain from the practice of the ancient church, in which, though all open offenders, as soon as known, were put under censure; yet if, before censure, they offered themselves at the communion, they were repelled. This is evident from St. Chrysostom,* who does not more earnestly press the duty, than he plainly asserts the authority of the sacerdotal power to effect it. "Let no Judas," says he, "no lover of money be present at this table; he that is not Christ's disciple, let him depart from it. Let no inhuman, no cruel person, no incompassionate or unchaste man, come hither. I speak this to you who administer, as well as to those

* Hom. 83. in Matt. xxvi.

who partake: For it is necessary I speak these things to you, that you may take great care, and use your utmost diligence to distribute these offerings aright. For no small punishment awaiteth you, if knowing any man to be wicked, you suffer him to be a partaker at this table; for his blood shall be required at your hands. Wherefore, if he be a general, or a provincial governor, or the emperor himself, who cometh unworthily, forbid him, and keep him off; thy power is greater than his. If any such get to the table, reject him without fear. If thou darest not remove him, tell it me, I will not suffer it; I will yield my life rather than the Lord's body to any unworthy person; and suffer my own blood to be shed, before I will grant that sacred blood to any but to him that is worthy."

Q. Have we any example in the primitive church of persons being rejected, if they offered themselves unworthily?

A. Yes; we have a remarkable instance in the case of the emperor Theodosius, whom St. Ambrose boldly and openly refused, upon the commission of a barbarous crime. The story being worthy the reader's notice, I shall, therefore, give it in a few words. There being a sedition among the inhabitants of Thessalonica, the emperor ordered the guards to slay them indiscriminately, and they destroyed several thousand innocent people. Soon after which, the emperor coming to Milan, was going to offer himself at St. Ambrose's church to receive the communion; but the good bishop met him courageously at the church door, and obliged him to return, and first repent of his crime. "With what eyes," saith he, "can you behold the temple of him who is the common Lord of all? With what feet can you tread this holy place? How can you extend those hands to receive the blessed elements, which are reeking with innocent blood? How can you take the precious blood of Christ into that mouth, which gave out such barbarous and

bloody orders? Depart, therefore, and take heed, that you do not increase your first crime by a second. Submit yourself to the bond which the Lord of the world has been pleased to bind you with, which is only medicinal, and intended to work your cure!"* This repulse the emperor acquiesced in, and offered himself no more at the holy table, till he had, in tears, repented of the sad effects of his hasty anger.

Q. What is the subject of the last rubric?

A. It concerns the covering and situation of the communion table; and also the place where the minister is to stand, and how he is to begin the communion service.

Q. What are the words of this rubric?

A. "The table, at the communion time, having a fair white linen cloth upon it, shall stand in the body of the church, or in the chancel; and the minister, standing at the north side of the table, or where morning and evening prayers are appointed to be said, shall say the Lord's prayer and the collect following, the people kneeling; but the Lord's prayer may be omitted, if morning prayer hath been said immediately before."

Q. What was the communion table called in the first ages of the Christian church?

A. For the first three hundred years after Christ, the holy board was continually distinguished by the name of Altar: during all which time it does not appear that it was more than once called table, and that was in a letter of Dyonysius of Alexandria, to Xystus of Rome. And when, in the fourth century, Athanasius called it a table, he thought himself obliged to explain the word, and to let the reader know that by table he meant altar, that being then the constant and familiar name. Afterwards, indeed, both names came to be promiscuously used; the one having respect to the oblation of the eucha-

* Theod. Hist. Eccl. lib. v.

rist, the other to the participation: But it was always placed altar-wise, in the most sacred part of the church, and fenced in with rails to secure it from irreverence and disrespect.

Q. Why is the minister to stand at the north side of the table?

A. The design of it is, that he may be the better seen and heard; which is perfectly agreeable to the practice of the primitive church; for bishop Beveridge has shown, that whenever, in the ancient liturgies, the minister is directed to stand before the altar, the north side of it is always meant.*

Q. Why is the table to be covered with a linen cloth?

A. The covering the altar "with a fair white linen cloth," at the time of the celebration of the Lord's supper, was a primitive practice, enjoined at first, and retained ever since for its decency. In the sacramentary of St. Gregory, this covering is called *the pall of the altar*, to distinguish it, in all probability, from the cloth that was thrown over the consecrated elements.

Q. What does the white linen cloth represent to us?

A. That innocency or purity of heart with which we ought to approach the holy table; reminding us, that however we may intrude ourselves into the society of the faithful in this life, without having on the wedding garment, yet, *without holiness no man shall see the Lord*, in that which is to come.

III. *Of the Lord's Prayer.*

Q. How is the minister directed to begin the communion service?

A. By saying the Lord's prayer, which is also to be repeated by the people kneeling; and which, as many of the Fathers testify, the primitive church always used in the celebration of the eucharist.

* Pandect. vol. ii. p. 76, sect. xiv. See also Renaudotius, 5 Liturgies, tom. ii. p. 24.

Q. Why is the Lord's prayer to be used at the beginning of this office?

A. Because it is the most suitable introduction to it, since he who instituted this holy ordinance was likewise the author of this prayer. St. Jerome affirms, that Christ taught it to his Apostles, that they might use it at the communion. To which he and the primitive Fathers thought it so peculiarly adapted, that they generally expounded the petition, *Give us this day our daily bread*, as referring more especially to the bread of life, the body of Christ, which in those times they daily received at the Lord's table.

Q. In what posture is the minister to say the Lord's prayer in this place?

A. Standing; because throughout this first part of the communion service, that is, from the Lord's prayer to the confession, he is considered as the representative of Christ in his office of Mediator between God and the faithful.

Q. How ought the Lord's prayer to be repeated?

A. With the greatest deliberation and devotion; especially at this time, when we beg of God the bread which must nourish us unto life eternal, and all the graces necessary to obtain that invaluable blessing.

IV. *Of the Collect for Purity.*

Q. What follows the Lord's Prayer?

A. The collect for purity, which is to be said by the minister, the people continuing to kneel.

Q. What is the antiquity of this collect?

A. It is very ancient, and has been used by the western church at the communion from the earliest ages. In the eastern church they likewise prayed in this office to the same effect: "O Lord, purify our souls and bodies from all pollutions of flesh and spirit."

Q. What are we here particularly led to admire in the compilers of our liturgy?

A. Their piety and judgment in retaining this concise and excellent form of devotion; for as the people of Israel were to be purified before the publication of the law from mount Sinai, so must our hearts be purified by the inspiration of the holy Spirit before we are in a suitable disposition to hear it.

V. *Of the Ten Commandments.*

Q. What follow the collect for purity?

A. The ten commandments, which the minister, turning to the people, is to rehearse distinctly; and the people, still kneeling, are, after every commandment, to ask God's mercy for their transgressions for the time past, and grace to keep the law for the time to come.

Q. Why are the commandments appointed to be read in church?

A. Because we vowed to keep them at our baptism, and this vow and promise we again solemnly renew every time we receive the holy communion; and it is therefore proper that we should hear them frequently repeated, especially at those periods when we enter into fresh engagements to observe them.

Q. What has God told us?

A. That his prayer shall be an abomination, who turns away his ear from hearing the law. Prov. xxviii. 9.

Q. Why are the commandments inserted in this place?

A. Because they could not be inserted in our service more conveniently than immediately before the gospel, to make that more acceptable to us when the law has humbled us by its terrors.

Q. How ought we to receive these commandments?

A. Not as the words of the minister, but of God himself; with the same humility, the same reverence, and the same determination to obey them,

with which they were received by the people of Israel, when they were first given from mount Sinai.

Q. Why are the people directed to kneel while the commandments are read?

A. Because of the frequent use of that excellent petition, *Lord, have mercy upon us*, &c. which ought to be repeated in a praying posture. For the so frequent and sudden change of the posture, from standing to kneeling, and again from kneeling to standing, which must otherwise be made, would occasion disturbance and confusion.

Q. How ought the minister to pronounce the commandments?

A. Not in a hurry, but with due deliberation, so as to give the people sufficient time to say, *Lord, have mercy upon us*, &c. that in the use of this petition, their minds may leisurely proceed with their words, and accompany them with intense devotion.

Q. What particular rule should the congregation observe?

A. That they do not even mentally repeat the commandments after the minister, much less pronounce them aloud, and thereby disturb those who are placed near them, but attend to them as they are spoken, with an awful and profound silence.

VI. *Of our Saviour's Epitomy of the Moral Law.*

Q. What follows the ten commandments?

A. Our Saviour's epitomy of the moral law, which is to be said by the minister, while the people continue to kneel.

Q. Why is this epitomy of the moral law added here?

A. To teach us, that its divine precepts are as obligatory upon us Christians, as they were upon the Jews, to whom they were originally delivered; and that love, as it engages the heart, and purifies the mind, is the principle by which alone they can properly be obeyed: For love to God will secure our

obedience to the first four commandments; and love to our neighbour for God's sake, will influence us to fulfil the rest.

VII. *Of the Collect for Preservation of Soul and Body.*

Q. What follows our Saviour's epitomy of the moral law?

A. The collect for preservation of soul and body, which is a very ancient form in the Christian church, and which is to be said by the minister, the people still kneeling.

Q. Why is the collect placed here?

A. Because we are not able of ourselves, or by our own natural powers, to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same to our life's end; and therefore it was proper to add this collect in this place, that we may obtain that help, which every person's own experience must assure him we stand in need of; that being preserved here from sin, we may hereafter be partakers of endless glory.

VIII. *Of the Collect for the Day.*

Q. What follows the collect for preservation of soul and body?

A. The collect for the day, in the use of which the people are to join, not vocally, but mentally, and at the end of it pronounce a loud, *Amen.*

Q. Why does the collect for the day follow next?

A. Because it is a suitable preparation to the succeeding portions of holy scripture, out of which it is taken, and to which it commonly refers.

Q. What is it proper to observe in this place?

A. That the people, at the end of this prayer, are to rise from kneeling, and quietly and decently take their seats, to hear the epistle.

IX. *Of the Epistle.*

Q. What follows the collect for the day?

A. The epistle, which, according to custom, is to be read while the people are seated; and which, also according to the rubric, the minister is to introduce by saying, *The epistle* [*or the portion appointed for the epistle*] *is written in the —— chapter of ——, beginning at the —— verse.*

Q. Why is the epistle to be read here?

A. In imitation of the primitive church, which long before the dividing of the Bible into chapters, used always to read some select portion of the epistolary writings at the celebration of the holy eucharist.

Q. How is the minister to give notice that the epistle is ended?

A. By saying, *Here endeth the epistle;* immediately upon which notice, the people are to stand up.

Q. What rule ought the minister to observe between the epistle and gospel?

A. To make such a pause that the whole congregation may have time, deliberately, and without the least hurry, to rise from their seats, and put themselves into a decent and suitable posture to hear the gospel.

X. *Of the Gospel.*

Q. What follows the epistle?

A. The gospel, which the minister is to introduce by saying, *The holy gospel is written in the —— chapter of ——, beginning at the —— verse.*

Q. Why are the people required to stand at the reading of the gospel?

A. To express their veneration for the words of our Lord, to show their readiness to execute his commands, and to denote their determination to follow wheresoever he may call.

Q. What are the people to say as soon as the gospel is announced?

A. Glory be to thee, O Lord; which words ought to be spoken with a cheerful and audible voice, as expressive of our gratitude to God for the glad tidings of salvation.

Q. What is it proper to notice here?

A. That when the gospel is concluded, the rubric does not authorize the minister to say, *Here endeth the gospel.*

XI. *Of the Creeds.*

Q. What follows the gospel?

A. "The Apostles' or Nicene creed, unless one of them hath been read immediately before, in the morning service."

Q. Why is one of the creeds appointed to be read after the gospel?

A. Because, since in this sacrament we are to renew our baptismal vow, one branch of which was, that we would believe all the articles of the Christian faith, it is very requisite, that if we have not already done it, we should here publicly declare, before we are admitted to this holy feast, that we still continue firm in the belief of those articles.

XII. *Of the Rubric after the Creeds.*

Q. Why is this rubric inserted in this place?

A. To instruct the minister what he is to publish, or make known to the people; to wit, what holy days, or fasting days are in the week following to be observed; and, if occasion be, notice shall be given of the communion, and of the bans of matrimony, and of other matters to be published.

Q. Why is the minister to notify holy days?

A. Because, the people instead of observing too many, as was the case some centuries ago, run into a contrary extreme, and regard none; it is there-

fore proper that the minister should perform his duty, by informing them what holy days will happen in the week; and after that to leave it upon the congregation to answer for the neglect, if they should be passed over without due attention.

XIII. *Of the Singing Psalms.*

Q. What follow the creeds?

A. A few stanzas of the authorized translation of the psalms in metre, which it is customary in our church to sing before the sermon.

Q. How does the introduction of psalmody in this instance appear to be proper, and to a certain degree necessary?

A. Because it relieves the mind, and removes the languor that might otherwise occasionally happen from their strict attention to the preceding service; and also because it affords the minister time and leisure to retire and lay off the surplice; and, after that, to ascend the pulpit, without leaving the people for want of employment, anxiously to expect his re-appearance in the exercise of his public duties.

Q. In what posture should the psalms be sung?

A. In a standing posture; for this practice, though enjoined by no rule, violates no rubric, and is consonant to the order of the other parts of the daily service. When the psalms are *read*, the congregation is directed to *stand*, and also when the hymns are said or sung.

Q. What ought we to remark in this place?

A. An error, which most parish clerks, when they notify the people what portion of the psalms is to be sung, are apt to commit; viz. instead of saying for instance, *Let us sing to the praise of God, the first four, or the last four verses*, of such or such a psalm, they will say, *Let us sing to the praise of God, the four first*, or *four last verses* of such or such a psalm. The *first four*, or *last four verses* there certainly may be, but the *four first*, or *four last verses* is impos-

sible; for there cannot, in the nature of the thing, be more than *one first* or *one last verse* in a psalm.

XIV. *Of the Sermon.*

Q. What follows the singing psalms?

A. The sermon, with only the intervention of a short collect, and the Lord's prayer.

Q. What ought the people to remember?

A. That if they hear the sermon with a religious attention, they will be much better disposed to receive the Lord's supper worthily. For by a pious and practical discourse, suited to this sacred ordinance, the minds of the communicants are put into a devout frame, and duly qualified for the succeeding mysteries.

Q. What is the antiquity of sermons?

A. They have been appointed to be used on all Sundays and holy days, but especially when the communion was to be administered, from the beginning of christianity.

Q. Why are sermons appointed in this particular place?

A. Because the first design of them was to explain the foregoing epistle and gospel, in imitation of that practice of the Jews mentioned in Nehemiah viii. 8; for which reason they were formerly called *Postills*.

Q. What collects or prayers is it customary for the minister to make use of in the pulpit immediately before and after sermon?

A. Before sermon it is generally customary to make use of that collect in the communion service which begins, *Direct us, O Lord,* &c. or the collect for the second Sunday in Advent, which begins, *Blessed Lord,* &c. After sermon, when there is no communion, it is generally customary to dismiss the congregation with that collect in the communion service which begins, *Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God,* &c. or with the prayer *for the whole*

state of Christ's Church militant, and a collect at the minister's discretion, together with the benediction at the close. It is to be noted, however, that if the minister who officiates in the common service of the day be only in deacon's orders, he is not permitted to pronounce the blessing which begins, *The peace of God*, &c. but is to conclude with the benedictory prayer, *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ*, &c. And it would be well for us all, whether deacons or priests, to recollect as often as we are called to preach, that there is no rubric which allows us to use extemporary prayers either before or after sermon; but a total disallowance and prohibition is there made of all such irregularities in the performance of public worship.

Q. In what posture is the minister to deliver the sermon, and the people to hear it?

A. In these times it is customary for the minister to stand, and the audience to sit, while he delivers the sermon. In ancient times the custom was directly the reverse of this; the people stood, and the minister sat; as did the Jews in the temple.

XV. *Of the Offertory.*

Q. What follows the sermon?

A. The offertory; for when there is a communion, the usual Sunday service being concluded, the minister is to return to the Lord's table, and resume the communion office, by saying one or more of the sentences appointed for that end, as he may think most convenient.

Q. Why are these sentences called the offertory?

A. Because they are appointed to be said by the minister, while the people are making their oblations, which in the ancient liturgies was directed to be done at the altar.

Q. What is the design of these sentences?

A. To lead us to the exercise of that charity, without which our faith would be dead, and all our devotions ineffectual in the sight of God.

Q. What is the most proper method of expressing our charity?

A. To dedicate some part of what God has given us to his use and service, which is frequently and strictly commanded in the gospel, which has the best examples for it, and the largest rewards promised to it; our charity being instead of all those vast oblations and costly sacrifices which the Jews always joined to their public services. It is, indeed, so necessary to recommend our prayers to God, that St. Paul prescribes collections; and the ancient church, in Justin Martyr's time, used to have them every Sunday.

Q. What was required of the Jews?

A. That when they came before the Lord at the solemn feasts, they should not appear empty; but that every man should give as he was able, according to the blessing of the Lord which he had given him. Deut. xvi. 16, 17. And our Saviour, with respect no doubt to the holy table, as Mr. Mede fully proves, supposes that we should never come to the altar without a gift, but always imitate his practice, whose custom of giving alms at the passover made his disciples mistake his words to him who bore the bag. And it is very probable, that at the time of receiving the sacrament, were all those large donations of houses, lands, and money made, which are mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles: for when these first converts were all united to Christ, and to one another, in this feast of love, their very souls were mingled; they cheerfully renounced their right and title to their goods, and freely distributed them among those to whom they had already given their hearts. None of ability were allowed to receive without giving something, and to reject any man's offering, was to deny him a share in the benefit of those comfortable mysteries.

Q. How are the alms and other devotions of the people distinguished?

A. By *the alms for the poor* must undoubtedly be understood all that is given for their relief; and

by the *other devotions of the people* are meant the offerings for the clergy, or their share in the collections. And it is well known that, in the primitive times, the clergy had a liberal maintenance out of what the people offered at the holy communion. Now, indeed, while they have stated incomes, the money collected at these occasions is generally appropriated to the poor: not but that where the income of a church is not sufficient to maintain the clergy belonging to it, they have still a right to claim their share in these offerings.

Q. By whom are they to be collected?

A. By the deacons, church-wardens, or other fit persons appointed for that purpose. It is, indeed, a custom with us, for the church-wardens to perform this office.

Q. How are they to be received?

A. In a decent bason, to be provided by the parish for the purpose; with which, in most places, they go to the several seats and pews of the congregation. Though in some churches they collect at the entrance into the chancel, where the people make their offerings as they draw towards the altar. This last way seems most conformable to the practice of the primitive church, which, in pursuance of a text delivered by our Saviour, Matt. v. 23, ordered, that the people should come up to the rails of the altar, and there make their offerings to the priest.

Q. Why are those who collect the alms of the people directed to bring the bason reverently to the priest?

A. Because this was the practice of the primitive church; and because it was also the custom of the ancient Jews, who, when they brought their gifts and sacrifices to the temple, offered them to God by the hands of the priest.

Q. What is the priest directed to do with the bason?

A. He is humbly to present and place it upon the holy table.

Q. When and by whom are the bread and wine to be placed on the table?

A. By the priest himself, immediately after he has placed on the alms, which he is to offer solemnly to God, as an acknowledgment of his sovereignty over his creatures, and that from thenceforth they might become properly and peculiarly his. For in all the Jewish sacrifices, of which the people were partakers, the viands or materials of the feast were first made God's by a solemn oblation, and afterwards eaten by the communicants, not as man's but as God's provision; who, by thus entertaining them at his own table, declared himself reconciled, and still in covenant with them. And, therefore, our blessed Saviour, when he instituted the new sacrifice of his own body and blood, first gave thanks and blessed the elements, that is, offered them up to God as Lord of the creatures, as the most ancient Fathers expound the passage; who, for that reason, whenever they celebrated the holy eucharist, always offered the bread and wine for the communion to God, upon the altar, by this, or some such short ejaculation, *Lord, we offer thee thine own, out of what thou hast bountifully given us.* After which they received them, as it were, from him again, to convert them into the sacred banquet of the body and blood of his dear Son. In the ancient church, they had generally a side-table near the altar, upon which the elements were laid, until the first part of the communion-service was finished, at which the catechumens were allowed to be present; but when they had departed, the elements were removed and placed upon the holy altar itself, with a solemn prayer. Now, though we have no side-table authorized by our church, yet the priest himself is ordered to set both the bread and wine upon the altar: whence it appears that the placing the elements upon the Lord's table, before the beginning of morning-prayer, by the hands of a clerk or sexton, as is now the general practice, is a breach of the rubric.

XVI. *Of the Prayer for Christ's Church.*

Q. What follows the offertory?

A. The prayer for Christ's church, which the priest is to say immediately after placing so much of the bread and wine upon the table, as he shall think sufficient.

Q. How is the priest directed to introduce this prayer?

A. By saying, "*Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's church militant;*" which words are manifestly addressed to the people, and the voice ought to be managed accordingly. The priest ought also to make a pause after the pronunciation of them, that the people may have time to kneel and compose themselves for prayer, so as to be ready to join mentally in the very beginning of this form.

Q. How does this prayer appear to be properly used in this place?

A. The alms and oblations of the people being now presented to God, it is a proper time to proceed to the exercise of another branch of our charity, I mean that of *intercession.* Our alms perhaps are confined to a few indigent neighbours; but our prayers may extend to all mankind, by recommending them to the mercy of God, who is able to supply and relieve all their necessities. Nor can we at any time more effectually intercede with our heavenly Father, than when we commemorate that meritorious sacrifice, by virtue whereof our great High Priest did once redeem us, and for ever continues to intercede for us in heaven. For which reason we find that the ancient and primitive Christians, whenever they celebrated these holy mysteries, used a form of intercession for the whole Catholic Church. But there is this difference between our practice and theirs, that whereas we use it immediately after placing the elements upon the table, it is in all the ancient liturgies, except in St. Mark's and the Ethiopian, deferred till after the consecration.

XVII. *Of the Exhortations before the Communion.*

Q. When are the exhortations to be read?

A. On the Sunday or some other holy day immediately preceding the communion.

Q. Why is the minister to give notice of the communion?

A. Because great mysteries ought to be ushered in with the solemnities of a correspondent preparation. When God was pleased to publish the law, he gave the Israelites three days notice, and commanded their festivals to be proclaimed by the sound of a trumpet some time before. When the Paschal Lamb, which was a type of Christ in this sacrament, was to be chosen for the celebration of the passover, it was to be kept four days, to put the people in mind of preparing themselves to observe it. And Christians having more and higher duties to perform, ought not to have less time or shorter warning. Wherefore, as good Hezekiah published, by particular expresses, his intended passover; so hath our church prudently ordered seasonable notice to be given of the communion, that the people might be acquainted with the time, and have an opportunity of coming duly prepared.

Q. Why were there no exhortations to the communion in the primitive church?

A. Because their daily, or at least weekly celebration of this sacrament, made it known to the communicants, that there was no solemn assembly of Christians without it. But now, when the time is somewhat uncertain, and our long omissions have made some of us ignorant, others forgetful of this duty, and most of us unwilling to discharge it, it is thought to be both prudent and necessary to provide these exhortations.

Q. What is particularly to be observed concerning them?

A. That they are so happily composed, that if

every communicant would duly consider and weigh them, they would be no small help towards a suitable preparation. The former contains proper instructions concerning the communion, and is generally used. The latter is more urgent, and applicable to those who abstain from receiving these holy mysteries, by showing them the danger of the vain and frivolous excuses which men commonly make for their declining this duty; for which reason it is directed to be used, when the minister shall observe that the people are negligent in coming to the Lord's table.

Q. How ought these exhortations to be read?

A. With the greatest deliberation, and with an affection that shall even force the attention of the hearers; which every pastor will think himself in conscience, and as he values the edification of his flock, obliged to do; especially when he considers how many poor Christians there are, who have little or no other means of coming to the knowledge of this sacrament, and the manner of preparing themselves for it, than what they receive from hearing these exhortations read.

Q. What does the rubric direct concerning the use of the first of these exhortations?

A. That the minister may either read the whole, or so much thereof as, in his discretion, he may think convenient.

XVIII. *Of the Exhortation at the Communion.*

Q. What follows the prayer for Christ's Church?

A. An exhortation to be said by the minister, while the people are perfectly silent, which, if they seriously attend to, will enable them the better to judge how well they are prepared for this holy ordinance.

Q. What is the design of this exhortation?

A. As the exhortations before the communion are intended to increase the number of communi-

cants, so the design of this exhortation is to rectify their dispositions, that they may not only be many, but good communicants. In the ancient Greek church, besides other preparatory matters, when the congregation were all placed in order to receive the sacrament, the priest, even then standing on the steps leading to the altar, so as to be seen of all, stretched out his hands, and lifted up his voice in the midst of that profound silence, inviting the worthy, and warning the unworthy to forbear. Which if it were necessary in those blessed days, how much more requisite is it in our degenerate age, wherein men have learned to trample upon church-discipline, and to approach the Lord's table out of fashion, at set times, whether they be prepared or not! Every sinner hopes to escape with impunity, but *knowing the terrors of the Lord*, though the people have been exhorted before, and though they are now come with a purpose of communicating, yet the priest again exhorts them in the words of St. Paul, *diligently to try themselves before they presume to eat of that bread, and drink of that cup*, &c.

Q. How ought this exhortation to be read?

A. With a serious gravity, and an affectionate warmth; for nothing surely can more effectually excite the devotion of the congregation than this admirable address, if it does not suffer in the pronunciation of it.

XIX. *Of the immediate Invitation.*

Q. What follows the exhortation at the communion?

A. The immediate invitation, which the priest is to say to those who come to receive the holy communion.

Q. What is the design of this invitation?

A. The feast being now ready, and the guests prepared with due instructions, the priest, who is the steward of those mysteries, invites them to

draw near; thereby putting them in mind, that they are now invited into Christ's more immediate presence, to meet with him at his own table: But then he adviseth them in the words of the primitive liturgies, to *draw near with faith*, without which all their bodily approaches will avail them nothing; it being only by faith that they draw near to Christ, and take the holy sacrament to their comfort. But seeing they cannot exercise their faith as they ought, until they have heartily confessed and repented of their sins; therefore he farther calls on them to make their humble confession to almighty God, devoutly kneeling: so that upon this invitation, and not before, all the communicants should come from the more remote parts of the church to the rails of the altar, or as near to the Lord's table as possible, and there kneel to confess their sins.

Q. What in particular is to be observed in this place?

A. That it is highly reasonable the minister should make such a pause between the end of the *invitation* and the beginning of the *confession*, that the whole congregation may have leisure, deliberately, and without the least hurry, to put their bodies in a praying posture—to direct their minds to God—to fix their attention upon the Divine Majesty—and to be thoroughly composed for so solemn an exercise by the time he begins the confession.

XX. *Of the Confession.*

Q. What follows the immediate invitation?

A. The confession, which is to be made by the priest, and all those who are minded to receive the holy communion, humbly kneeling.

Q. Why is the minister to kneel?

A. Because he confesses his own sins, as well as the sins of the people.

Q. What is it proper to observe concerning this form?

A. That, considered as a composition, it is equally

excellent with the one appointed for morning and evening prayer.

Q. What do we learn concerning the practice of the primitive church?

A. That at the celebration of the eucharist, confession of sins, with prayers for mercy and forgiveness, always preceded the consecration of the elements.

Q. What rule should the minister observe in the use of this confession?

A. To speak very slow and distinct, and to make a suitable pause at the end of every sentence, that the people may have time and leisure to accompany him with the most hearty contrition and intense devotion.

XXI. *Of the Absolution.*

Q. What follows the confession?

A. The absolution, which is to be said by the priest, or the bishop if he be present, standing and turning to the people, who are to continue kneeling.

Q. Why is the priest to pronounce this absolution standing?

A. Because the declaration of it is an act of his sacerdotal authority.

Q. Why are the people to continue kneeling?

A. Because it is the most proper position to receive pardon and absolution from Almighty God, pronounced by the mouth of his minister.

Q. Why is the absolution to be used in this place?

A. Because the communicants, having confessed their sins with penitent hearts, and remaining depressed under a sense of their iniquities, are now in a situation that peculiarly requires the aid of spiritual consolation.

Q. How ought this absolution to be read?

A. In a very solemn and impressive manner; but as it is addressed to men, and not to God, it must be spoken in a very different tone of voice from the prayers.

we hope to praise him through all eternity; for which end the Christians of the very first ages took this hymn into their office for the sacrament, it being of divine original, and, therefore, nothing could have been more suitable.

XXV. *Of the proper Prefaces.*

Q. Why are these prefaces to be repeated eight days successively?

A. To the end that the mercies commemorated on the greater festivals may be the better remembered by frequent repetition; and also that all the people, who, in many places, cannot communicate all in one day, may have other opportunities within those eight days, to join in praising God for such great blessings. See the Sunday after Christmas.

Q. What is the design of these prefaces?

A. That all who receive at any of those times to which these prefaces relate, should, besides the general praises offered for all God's mercies, make a special memorial proper to the festival.

Q. What is the subject of them?

A. All of them, except that for Trinity Sunday, which is appointed by reason of the great mystery it celebrates, relate to the principal acts of our redemption, namely, the nativity, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour, and of his sending the Holy Ghost to comfort us.

XXVI. *Of the Address.*

Q. What follows the Trisagion?

A. The address, unless one of the prefaces intervene; which the priest, kneeling down at the Lord's table, is to offer up in the name of all those who shall receive the holy communion; therein acknowledging his own and the people's unworthiness, in expressions taken from the most ancient liturgies.

Q. Why is this address added here?

A. To temper our exultations, lest they should savour of too much confidence: for since it is of God's mere grace and goodness that we have the honour to approach his table, it is our duty to acknowledge it, with humility, to be a free and undeserved favour; belonging rather to the mercy of the giver, than to the deserts of the receivers. And besides, the nearer we draw to these holy mysteries, the greater reverence we ought to pay to this solemn institution.

XXVII. *Of the Prayer of Consecration.*

Q. What follows the address?

A. The prayer of consecration, which is to be said by the priest, standing, after he hath so ordered the bread and wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the bread before the people, and take the cup into his hands.

Q. What is the antiquity of this prayer?

A. It is the most ancient and essential part of the whole communion office; and there are some who believe, that the Apostles themselves, after a suitable introduction, used the latter part of it, viz. from those words, *Who in the same night*, &c. and it is certain no liturgy has ever altered this prayer in that particular.

Q. Wherein appears the reasonableness and propriety of this prayer?

A. Since the ancient Greeks and Romans would not taste of their ordinary meat and drink, until they had hallowed them by giving the first parts of them to their Gods; since the Jews would not eat of their sacrifice till Samuel came to bless it; and since the primitive Christians always began their common meals with a solemn prayer for a blessing; a custom so universal, that it is certainly a part of natural religion; we ought much more to expect the prayers of the priest over this mysterious food of our souls, before we partake of it; especially since our Saviour

himself did not deliver the bread and wine until he had consecrated them, by blessing them and giving thanks.

Q. What does the priest's taking the bread into his hands, and breaking it, signify?

A. That he makes a memorial to God of our Saviour's body broken upon the cross.

*Q. And what does he remind us of when he exhibits the wine?**

A. Of Christ's blood shed for the sins of the whole world.

Q. And what when he lays his hands upon all the bread and wine?

A. By laying his hands upon each of them, at the same time that he repeats those words, *Take, eat, this is my body*, &c. and, *Drink ye all of this*, &c. he signifies and acknowledges that this commemoration of Christ's sacrifice, so made to God, is a means instituted by Christ himself, to convey to the communicants the benefits of his death and passion, namely, the pardon of our sins, and God's grace and favour for the time to come.

Q. What in particular is to be noted here?

A. That there will be a decent pause before the priest begins the prayer of consecration, when each communicant will have time privately to offer this, or some such short prayer for himself, and for all present, namely,

The good Lord pardon me, and every one here present, who hath prepared his heart to seek the Lord, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary! 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19.

* The mixing water with the wine is a very ancient as well as a very general practice. But this being a human institution, our church, which, in common with others, has "the power of decreeing rights and ceremonies" for itself, has omitted it. See the 20th Art. of Religion.

XXVIII. *Of the Prayer of Oblation.*

Q. What follows the prayer of consecration?

A. The prayer of oblation.

Q. Why is this prayer ordered to be used immediately after the prayer of consecration?

A. In conformity to the practice of the primitive Christians, who always used it during the act of consecration; for the holy eucharist was, from the very first institution of it, esteemed and received as a proper sacrifice, and solemnly offered to God upon the altar, before it was received and partaken of by the communicants.

Q. What is the design of this prayer?

A. That while we commemorate the sacrifice of Christ, we should join to it the sacrifice of ourselves. We should offer up ourselves in union with him to the Almighty Father; and beseech him by the merits of his death, to work in us a spiritual death to sin; to destroy in us self-love, self-will, the root of all sin, that we may pass the rest of our lives wholly in his service.

Q. What is necessary after this donation of ourselves?

A. That we continue to repeat and ratify it very frequently in private, as well as in public, until it becomes habitual, and we find our resignation established by an inviolable fidelity; and accordingly we must consider ourselves as no longer our own, or at our own disposal, but as persons devoted to God, to do as he commands, and suffer all he appoints.

Q. How ought we to dedicate ourselves to God when we approach the holy table?

A. With an humble confidence, pouring out privately at the throne of grace, this, or some such like ejaculation: *The heart which I desire to present unto thee, O Lord, is corrupt indeed, but such as it is, I give it. Make it such as thou wouldst have it.*

I bring it to thee as to its physician. Thou only canst heal its infirmities. I bring it to thee as to its Creator. Thou only canst repair thine own work. Thou only canst make me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.

XXIX. *Of the Hymn.*

Q. What follows the prayer of oblation?

A. A hymn, or part of a hymn, from the selection for the feasts and fasts, &c.

Q. Why is a hymn appointed to be sung here?

A. As an alleviation to the mind, and that our devotions may not only be raised to the highest degree of perfection, but that the choir of communicants may also be emblematic of that of angels.

Q. How ought it to be sung?

A. With the most exalted devotion, and a suitable reverence both of soul and body. Our outward carriage ought to be grave and serious, our frame of spirit affectionate and fervent; particularly when the hymn is addressed and directed immediately to the divine Majesty, and consequently a solemn prayer to him, we ought to join therein, not kneeling or sitting, but standing, and with our hearts and eyes lifted up to heaven.

XXX. *Of the Form of Administration.*

Q. What follows the hymn?

A. The form of administration.

Q. How is the communion to be received?

A. The minister who officiates *is first to receive the communion in both kinds himself; then to proceed to deliver the same to the bishops, priests, and deacons in like manner, that is, in both kinds, if any be present; and, after that, the people also in order, into their hands, all devoutly kneeling.*

Q. Why may not the communicants take every one his part?

A. Because God, who is the master of the feast, has provided stewards to divide to every one his portion.

Q. Why is the communion to be delivered first to the clergy?

A. That they may assist the minister who officiates, and because this is consonant to the practice of the primitive church, in which it was always the custom of the clergy to commemorate within the rails of the altar, and before the sacrament was delivered to the people.

Q. Why is it to be delivered both to the clergy and laity into their hands?

A. Because this was the primitive way of receiving it.

Q. What does the receiving of the bread into the hand signify?

A. Our apprehending Christ by faith, and receiving him into our hearts as the living bread, which will nourish our souls unto eternal life.

Q. Why is the sacrament to be received kneeling?

A. To signify our humble and grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of Christ therein given to all worthy receivers, and for the avoiding of such profanation and disorder in the holy communion as might otherwise ensue.

Q. When was the posture of kneeling first introduced?

A. It is hard to determine; but we are assured that it has obtained in the western church above thirteen hundred years; and though anciently they stood in the east, yet it was with fear and trembling, with silence and down cast eyes, bowing themselves in the posture of worship and adoration. And it is now the custom of the Greek, Roman, Lutheran, and most churches in the world to receive kneeling.

Q. By whom was sitting introduced?

A. The posture of sitting was first brought into the church by the Arians; who, stubbornly denying the divinity of our Saviour, thought it no robbery

to be equal with him, and to sit down with him at his table: for which reason this custom was abolished in the reformed church in Poland, by a general synod, A. D. 1583. It is also the singular privilege of the pope, whenever he performs the office of consecration, to communicate sitting.

Q. But is not the kneeling at the sacrament, paying adoration to the bread and wine?

A. No; it is certain that, in our church, no adoration is intended to be made to the sacramental bread and wine; for they still remain in their natural substances, and, therefore, may not be adored, for that were idolatry to be abhorred by all faithful Christians. The natural body and blood of our Saviour Christ are in heaven, and not here; it being against the truth of Christ's natural body, to be at the same time in more places than one.

Q. In what posture did the Apostles receive the communion?

A. It is uncertain; but we may probably conjecture that they received it in a posture of adoration; for it is plain that our Saviour blessed and gave thanks both for the bread and wine; and prayers and thanksgivings were always offered up to God in a posture of adoration; and, therefore, we may very safely conclude, that our blessed Saviour, who was always remarkable for his outward reverence in devotion, gave thanks for the bread and wine in an adoring posture.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the words of administration?

A. That the first part of them, namely, *The body, or the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ,* was the only form used in St. Ambrose's time at the delivery of the bread and wine, to which the receivers answered, *Amen.* The next words, *Preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life,* were added by St. Gregory. And the whole form, as it now stands in the prayer book, was drawn up by a committee of English divines, soon after the Reformation; thereby uniting

the different forms of the primitive church into one, and adding to it a kind of paraphrase, to make it manifest that faith is the mean by which the body of Christ is eaten.

Q. Was it the custom of the primitive church to communciate under one kind only?

A. No; for this was a practice unknown to the world for a thousand years after Christ.

Q. If the consecrated bread and wine be consumed before all have communicated, what is the priest to do?

A. To consecrate more, according to the form before prescribed; beginning at, *All glory be to thee, Almighty God*, and ending with these words, *Partakers of his most blessed body and blood.*

Q. And what is he to do when all have communicated?

A. To "return to the Lord's table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth."

XXXI. *Of the Lord's Prayer.*

Q. What follows the delivery of the bread and wine?

A. The Lord's prayer, which is to be said by the minister and people kneeling.

Q. Why is the communion concluded with the Lord's prayer and some other devotions?

A. Because our Saviour concluded his last supper with an hymn, supposed to be the paschal *Hallelujah*, in imitation of which all churches finished this feast with solemn forms of prayer and thanksgiving.

Q. Why is the Lord's prayer to be used first, after receiving the bread and wine?

A. Because, having now received Christ in our hearts by faith, it is proper the first word we speak should be his, as if Christ lived and spake in us. We know that to as many as receive Christ, he gives power to become the sons of God, so that we

may now all with one heart, and one voice, address ourselves cheerfully to God, and very properly call him *Our Father*, &c.

Q. Why is the doxology annexed here?

A. Because all the devotions are designed for an act of praise, for the benefits received in the holy sacrament.

XXXII. *Of the Prayer after the Lord's Prayer.*

Q. What follows the Lord's prayer?

A. A prayer to express the joyful sense of our minds, for the benefits received in this sacrament, and to intercede with God for "grace to continue in that holy fellowship, and to do all such good works as he has prepared for us to walk in," that we may hereafter become heirs of his everlasting kingdom.

XXXIII. *Of the Gloria in Excelsis, or the Hymn.*

Q. What follows the prayer after the Lord's prayer?

A. The *Gloria in Excelsis*, or some proper hymn from the selection, which is to be said or sung by all the communicants, standing.

Q. Repeat the rubric.

A. "Then shall be said or sung, all standing, *Gloria in Excelsis*, or some proper hymn from the selection."

Q. What do you mean by GLORIA IN EXCELSIS?

A. GLORIA IN EXCELSIS are Latin words, signifying, *Glory be to God on high;* and as they begin this hymn, so it is generally called by that name, though it is sometimes called the angelic hymn, because the former part of it is of a heavenly original, being sung by angels at our Saviour's nativity; and was from thence transcribed into the Oriental liturgies, especially St. James', where it is thrice repeated. The latter part of it is ascribed to Telesphoras,

about the year of Christ 139; and the whole hymn, with very little difference, is to be found in the apostolic constitutions, and was authorized to be used in the church-service by the fourth council of Toledo, above a thousand years ago. This hymn is properly placed at the close of the communion; and no devout Christian who is possessed of gratitude, and who is desirous of an opportunity to pour out his soul in the praises of God, can have a more solemn and concise form of words to do it in, than this. In the Greek church it makes a constant part of the morning devotions, as well upon ordinary days as upon Sundays and holy days; only with this difference, that upon ordinary days it is read, whereas upon more solemn times it is appointed to be sung.

XXXIV. *Of the final Blessings.*

Q. In what manner are the people dismissed from this ordinance?

A. By a solemn blessing pronounced by the bishop, if present, or, in his absence, by the priest; and in the primitive church none of the congregation were allowed to depart till this was given by the one or the other.

Q. Whence is the form here used taken?

A. Chiefly from the words of scripture: the first part of it from Phil. iv. 7; and the other part being no other than a Christian paraphrase upon Num. vi. 24, &c.

Q. In what manner ought we to receive this blessing?

A. As coming from God himself, with all imaginable devotion.

Q. What was the blessing wherewith they first dismissed the people after the daily sacrifice, by God's especial order, under the law?

A. It was this, THE LORD BLESS THEE, AND KEEP THEE! THE LORD MAKE HIS FACE TO SHINE UPON THEE, AND BE GRACIOUS UNTO THEE! THE

LORD LIFT UP THE LIGHT OF HIS COUNTENANCE UPON THEE, AND GIVE THEE PEACE. Num. vi. 24.

Q. And with what devotion did they receive this blessing?

A. We are told, Eccles. l. 21, that when "the priest lifted up his hands over the congregation, to give the blessing of the Lord with his lips, they bowed themselves, that they might receive a blessing from the Most High."

Q. What in particular ought we to observe here?

A. That, lest any one should think too lightly of this blessing, because pronounced by a mortal like himself, it is added, Num. vi. 27, *I, the Lord, will bless them;* showing, that the effect of the blessing does not depend upon man, but upon the ordinance of God, from the mouth of his own minister, whom God "hath chosen to bless in the name of the Lord." Deut. xxi. 5.

XXXV. *Of the additional Prayers.*

Q. Why are these collects added here?

A. Lest there should be any thing left unasked in the preceding service of the day.

Q. But are they to be used at the communion only?

A. No; but may be said after the collect for either morning or evening prayer, at the discretion of the minister.

Q. What is proper to be observed here?

A. That these collects are very plain and comprehensive, and almost every sentence of them taken out of the Bible, and are as proper to be joined to any other office as this; for which reason it is left to the discretion of the minister to use them when he judges proper.

XXXVI. *Of the Rubric after the Communion.*

Q. How often was the communion administered in the primitive church?

A. While Christians were strong in faith and ardent in devotion, those who were qualified generally communicated once every day, or at least as often as assemblies were held for public worship; which custom remained till after St. Augustine's time; but when primitive piety abated, this laudible practice was discontinued.

Q. What was the consequence of this neglect?

A. Canons were made by several councils to oblige men to receive the communion three times a year at least, viz. at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, (probably in conformity to the practice of the ancient Jews, who were commanded by God himself to appear before the Lord at the three great feasts which correspond to these; namely, in the feast of unleavened bread, in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles); and those who neglected to communicate at those seasons were censured by the church.

Q. And how often does our Church require the performance of this duty?

A. She specifies no particular days or seasons, but leaves it altogether to the discretion of the minister, who will undoubtedly feel himself obliged to give the pious and well-disposed part of his flock as frequent opportunities of testifying their love to their Saviour as possible; and God forbid that any one should deprive them of these happy opportunities of increasing their graces, and securing their pardon and salvation; or that any person who calls himself a Christian, should make an excuse of not receiving this sacred ordinance, when his interest and duty oblige him to it.

Q. How much of this office is to be read on every Sunday and holy day?

A. All that is appointed to the end of the gospel, together with one or more of the collects at the end of the communion, concluding with the blessing.

Q. Why is so much of this service ordered to be read, though there be no communion?

A. Because there are several things in that part of it which ought to be read as well to those who do not communicate, as to those who do. As, first, the decalogue or ten commandments of Almighty God, the Supreme Law-Giver of the world, which it is requisite the people should often hear and be put in mind of, especially on those days which are immediately dedicated to his service. And, 2dly, the collects, epistles, and gospels, proper to all Sundays and holy days, without which those festivals could not be distinguished either from each other, or even from ordinary days, nor consequently celebrated so as to answer the end of their institution.

Q. How is the consecrated bread and wine, which remain after the communion, to be disposed of?

A. It must not be carried out of the church, but the minister and other communicants are, immediately after the blessing, reverently to eat and drink the same. In the primitive church, whatever of the consecrated elements were left, after all had communicated, were either reserved by the priest to be administered to infirm persons in cases of exigency, that they might not die without receiving the blessed sacrament, or else were sent about to absent friends, as pledges and tokens of love and agreement in the unity of the same faith. But this custom, being abused, was afterwards prohibited by the Council of Laodicea, and the remains began to be divided among the clergy; and sometimes the other communicants were allowed to partake with them, as is now usual in our church.

Q. How are the elements to be provided?

A. By the minister or church-wardens, at the charges of the parish; or rather from the donations of the communicants.

Q. What kind of bread is necessary to be used in this sacrament?

A. It is sufficient that it be such as is usually eaten

at our common tables,* provided it be of the best and purest wheat flour that may conveniently be procured.

N. B. The qualifications required to the acceptable receiving the Lord's supper, are the same that are required in acceptable prayer. The sins for which men ought to be excluded from this ordinance, are the same, persisted in, for which sacred scripture allows that they should be excluded from the Christian society, and that such shall be excluded from the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER VII.

Of the Ministration of public Baptism of Infants, to be used in the Church.

Acts ii. 39.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are far off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

I. *Of Baptism in general.*

Q. By *whom has the washing with water been used as a symbol of purification?*

A. Water has so natural a property to cleanse, that it has been made the symbol of purification by all nations, and used with that signification in the rites of all religions. The heathens used divers kinds of baptism to expiate their crimes; and the Jews baptized such as were admitted proselytes at large; and when any heathens who had been circumcised became Jews, they received them by baptism only; with which ceremony they also pu-

* The use of unleavened bread was not known in the Christian church till the eleventh or twelfth centuries. See Broughton's Historical Library, page 506.

rified such heathen women as were taken in marriage by Jewish husbands. And this is that universal, plain, and easy rite which our Lord Jesus Christ ordained to be a sacrament of admission into the Christian Church.

Q. How does the washing with water typify a new birth?

A. As washing is the first thing done to us after our natural birth, to cleanse us, so when we are admitted into the Christian church, we are first baptized; whereby the Holy Ghost cleanses us from the pollutions of our sins, renews us to God, and so we become, as it were, spiritual infants, and enter into a new life, which before we had not. For which reason, when the Jews baptized any of their proselytes, they called it their *new birth*, *regeneration*, or being *born again*; and, therefore, when our Saviour used this phrase to Nicodemus, he wondered that he, *being a master in Israel*, should not have understood him. And even among the Greeks, this was thought to have such virtue and efficacy, as to give new life to those who were, in a religious sense, deemed to be dead.

Q. What is the form of baptism?

A. Our Saviour only instituted the essential parts of it, viz. that it should be performed by a duly authorized minister, with water, *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. With regard to the rites and circumstances of the administration of baptism, Christ left them to the determination of the Apostles and the church. Yet, without doubt, a form of baptism was very early agreed upon, because almost all churches in the world administer it much after the same manner.

Q. How many offices of baptism have we?

A. Three; one for infants in public; another for infants in danger of death in private; and a third for those of riper years.

II. *Of Infant Baptism in particular.*

Q. *How does it appear that infants have a right to baptism?*

A. As baptism was appointed for the same end that circumcision was, and did succeed in the place of it, it is reasonable it should be administered to the same kind of subjects: For since God commanded infants to be circumcised, it cannot be doubted but that he would also have them to be baptized. Nor is it necessary that Christ should have particularly mentioned children in his commission to his Apostles to baptize. It is sufficient that he did not exclude them; for that supposes he intended no alteration in this particular, but that children should be initiated into the Christian as well as they had been into the Jewish church. And, indeed, if we consider the custom of the Jews at that time, it is impossible but that the Apostles must necessarily have understood him as speaking of children as well as of adults.

Q. *Was it a custom amongst the Jews to baptize infants?*

A. Yes; for as the Jews baptized as well as circumcised all proselytes to their religion; so it is well known, that if any of those converts had then any infant children, they were also both baptized and circumcised, if males; or if females, only baptized, and so admitted as proselytes. The child's inability to declare or promise for himself, was not considered as a bar against his reception into the covenant.

Q. *Was the ceremony of baptism used among the Jews upon such extraordinary occasions only?*

A. No; but it seems rather to have been an ordinary rite, constantly administered by them, as well to their own as to the children of proselytes: for the Mishna prescribes the solemn washing, as well as the circumcision of the child, which is dif-

ficult to be interpreted, if it be not understood of a baptismal washing.

Q. What do we learn from hence?

A. That it was the constant practice of the Jews to baptize as well as to circumcise infants, and our Saviour making no exception, but commanding his Apostles to *go and disciple all nations, baptizing them*, &c. is a sufficient argument to prove, that he intended no alteration in the subjects of baptism. For when the commission was given, and there was no express direction what should be done with the infants of those who became disciples, the natural and obvious interpretation is, that the Apostles must do in this matter as the church to which they had belonged had always been used to do.

Q. What would have been the consequence, had the Apostles left children out of the covenant, and not received them as members of the Christian church?

A. The Jews, who took such care that their children should not want their own sacrament of initiation, would certainly have urged this as a great objection against the Christian religion.

Q. But do we read that any such objection was ever made?

A. No; and therefore, we may be assured that the Apostles gave them no room for such complaints.

Q. Has it not often been objected by those who deny infant baptism, that the scriptures make no express mention of it?

A. Yes; but neither do the scriptures make any express mention of the sabbath;* and yet there are but few of those who deny infant baptism, but think the observation of the first day of the week sufficiently authorized from the New Testament,

* It is to be observed, that this is not the only instance wherein the enemies of infant baptism contradict themselves in practice. They admit women to the holy communion; yet the same arguments which prove that women have a right to this ordinance, do also prove that children have a right to baptism.

though this is not more clearly implied than the other. We read in several places of whole households being baptized, without any exception of their infants or children. But is it not very unlikely there should be so many households without children? And, therefore, since no children are excepted, we may reasonably conclude, that they were baptized as well as the rest of the family. The baptism of adults being more for the honour of the Christian religion, the holy writers chose only to name the principal persons baptized, thinking it sufficient to include their children and servants under the general terms of *all theirs*, or their *households*. And what makes it still more probable that children were really included in these terms, is, that the scripture no where mentions deferring the baptism of any Christian's child, or putting it off till he came to years of discretion.

Q. But is this objection of the silence of the scriptures true?

A. No; for the learned Doctor Wall* has sufficiently rescued a passage in the New Testament from the gloss of some modern interpreters; and showed both by comparing it with other texts of scripture, and from the interpretation of the ancients, that it cannot justly be understood in any other sense than of the baptism of infants.

Q. What is the passage alluded to?

A. A text in St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, *else were your children unclean, but now they are holy:* On which he shows, from several places of the Old Testament, that is, from the original texts, and the interpretation given of them by the learned Jews, that *to sanctify*, or *make holy*, was a common expression among the Jews for baptizing or washing. It is also plain from the New Testa-

* Dr. Wall's history of infant baptism is much the best vindication of infant baptism that has ever appeared, and I would recommend it to the serious perusal of my reader.

ment, that the same expression is twice used by this Apostle in the same sense, viz. once in the epistle from which this text is taken, and once in his epistle to the Ephesians. Dr. Wall also refers to a learned author to show that it was a common phrase with the ancients, to say that an infant or other person was *sanctified* or *made holy* when they adverted to his baptism. And it is certain, that this sense of this passage of St. Paul very much illustrates what goes before. The Apostle was directing, that if any man or woman had an husband or wife who did not believe, they should not therefore separate or part; the reason of which, he says, is, because *the unbelieving husband is sanctified*, or, as it is in the Greek, and as commentators agree it should be translated, *an unbelieving husband has been sanctified by the wife;* that is, it has often come to pass that an unbelieving husband has been brought to the faith, and so to baptism, by his wife; and an unbelieving wife has, in the same sense, been sanctified by her husband. As a proof of which the Apostle observes, *else were your children unclean, but now are they holy;* that is, if it were not so, or if the wickedness or infidelity of the unbelieving party prevailed, the children of such would generally be kept unbaptized, and so be unclean: But now, by the grace of God, we see a contrary effect; for they are generally baptized, and so become sanctified or holy. This exposition, as the Doctor observes, is so much the more probable, because there has been no other sense of these words yet given by expositors, but what is liable to much dispute. The interpretation, especially, which is given by the enemies of infant baptism, namely, of legitimacy in opposition to bastardy, seems very ridiculous indeed.

Q. What was the opinion of the most ancient Fathers upon this subject?

A. We have all their testimonies on the side of infant baptism; and surely they must be allowed

to be competent witnesses of what was done by the Apostles themselves. They could tell whether themselves or their fathers were baptized in their infancy, or whether it was the Apostles' doctrine or advice they should be unbaptized till they arrived at years of maturity. In none of the Fathers do we meet with any thing that favours the opinion of those who reject infant baptism, but in almost all of them we find a direct confutation of it. In some of them we have express mention of the practice of the church in baptizing infants; and even in those who say nothing as to the age when baptism should be administered, we have frequent sentences whence the baptism of infants may be inferred. St. Clement, for example, in the time of the Apostles, speaks of original sin as affecting infants: If so, then baptism is necessary to wash it away. Nay, he expressly says, "Baptize your infants, and educate them in the discipline and admonition of God," &c. And a little after he gives this reason: "There is this difference betwixt baptized and unbaptized infants, that baptized infants enjoy the good things of baptism, which those that are not baptized do not enjoy; and that they enjoy them by the faith of those who offer them."* Justin Martyr affirms, that baptism is to us in the place of circumcision; whence we may reasonably conclude, that baptism ought to be administered to the same kind of subjects. In another place he mentions several who *were discipled*, or *made disciples of Christ, whilst children:* which plainly intimates, that children may be baptized. The only objection of the anti-pædobaptists against infant baptism is, their incapacity to be made disciples. But here they may perceive, that if Justin rightly understood the scriptures, children may be disciples of Christ. Irenæus, who lived but a little after Justin, numbers infants among those who were *born again to God;* a phrase which

* Lib. vi. cap. 13.

in most ecclesiastical writers, and especially in Irenæus, is generally used to signify that *regeneration* which is the effect of baptism. And that this must be the sense of the word here is plain, because infants are not capable of being born again in any other way. He also says, that "Christ did sanctify every age by his own susception of it, and similitude to it,"* &c. "For this also did the church learn from the Apostles to baptize infants,"† &c. "Children, or little ones, are baptized for remission of sins,"‡ &c. "Children are also to be baptized,"‖ &c. Tertullian again, a few years after Irenæus, speaks of infant baptism as the general practice of his time. In the next century, Origen, in several places, expressly assures us that infants were baptized by the usage of the church. And about the year 250, which was but 150 years after the Apostles, St. Cyprian and 66 bishops in council, declared unanimously, that none were to be debarred baptism and the grace of God: "Which rule, saith he, as it holds for all, so we think it more especially to be observed in reference to infants." Gregory Nazianzen, who flourished about 370, says,—"Hast thou a child? Let not sin get the advantage, but let him be sanctified," that is, baptized, "from his infancy." And again, "Thus for the baptism of those who desire baptism; but what shall we say of infants, who are sensible neither of the gain nor loss of it; shall we baptize them? Most certainly," &c. St. Ambrose, who wrote about 374 years from the Apostles, says expressly, that the baptism of infants had been the practice of the Apostles themselves, and of the church till that time. And this he mentions only casually, when speaking on another subject, which

* Lib. ii. sect. 39. advers. Hæres.
† In Epis. ad Rom. lib. v.
‡ In Lucam Homil. xiv.
‖ Homil. viii.

plainly proves it was not a matter of debate. It would be tedious to cite all the authors who might be produced to this purpose. I shall, therefore, only mention the testimony of St. Austin, who wrote his piece against the Donatists about 300 years after the Apostles, in which he has these words: "If any man ask for divine authority in the matter of infants being baptized, though that which the whole church practises, and which has not been instituted by any council, but was ever in use, is very reasonably believed to be no other than a thing delivered by the authority of the Apostles, yet we may form a true estimation how much baptism avails infants by the circumcision which God's former people received." And he urges the same thing in his controversy with Pelagius, which was about the year 410. Pelagius taught, that infants were born free from any sinful defilements: St. Austin writes against him, and insists on the baptism of infants, which was the known practice of the church, as an argument of their natural defilement. In his plea he has these words, "That infants are by all Christians acknowledged to stand in need of baptism, which must be in them for original sin, since they have no other." Again, says he, "If they have no sin, why are they admitted to the usage of the church baptism? Why are they washed with the laver of regeneration, if they have no defilement?"—Pelagius was extremely puzzled with this argument, as he could not pretend to deny infant baptism. Nay, when some charged him with denying it, as the necessary consequence of his doctrine, he endeavoured to refute the charge, and has these remarkable words: "Men slander me," says he, "as if I denied baptism to infants." This he calls a slander, and affirms in a rage, that the thing they accuse him of saying was a thing "that he never heard any man, no, not any impious sectary, say. For who," adds he, "is so ignorant of what is read in the

gospel," meaning John iii. 5. " as to hinder infants from being baptized, and born again in Christ, and to make them miss of the kingdom of heaven." For though he thought a child dying unbaptized would have no punishment, as having no actual sin; yet he thought it could not go to heaven, as having no interest in Christ. The same Pelagius, in his profession of faith to the bishop of Rome, has these words, viz. " That children ought to be baptized as they were wont to be." Indeed, the first person I ever read of who denied this primitive custom, was one Auxentius, an Arian, towards the close of the fourth century; but not being able to procure to himself any proselytes, he and his error expired together, without much injury to the church at that time. The next was Peter de Bruys, in the eleventh century, from whom arose a sect in France and the Netherlands, called Petrobrusians. The next that I can find any account of, were a sect of Anabaptists* in Germany, which arose about the year of our Lord 1533; some of whom, being obliged to flee their native soil for their seditious practices, made their escape into England, where they began to broach their schismatical tenets, and where they soon made some proselytes to their party. These, in process of time, being refined upon, and justly renouncing most of the enormities of their first leaders, assumed the name of Baptists, and now differ in nothing from the Presbyterians, as will appear by having recourse to a confession of faith published by the representatives of about a hundred of their congregations in 1689, except their rejecting infant baptism;† though there are those

* We are informed, that the ringleaders of the Anabaptists not only came to untimely deaths, but also repented of their erroneous notions when they came to die. See Ross' View of all Religions. Read also Winter's Treatise of Infant Baptism.

† I might, however, have added, that they reject *sprinkling* and *pouring*, which the others receive as equally valid with *immersion*.—And here I beg leave to remark, that the appellation,

among them who deny the lawfulness of oaths, maintain free-will, the seventh-day sabbath, and the thousand years reign. The Baptists in this country descended from the Baptists in England, and their sentiments correspond. In Holland there was a sect of Anabaptists denominated Mennonites, from one Menno Simonis of Frisia, who lived in the sixteenth century. The Waldenses are also claimed by those who now style themselves Baptists, as having been of their party; but in the 12th article of their confession of faith, A. D. 1582, they expressly say, "That children are to be baptized unto salvation, and to be consecrated to Christ according to his word, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." In the preface to this confession, they also declare that it contains "the doctrines which they received from their ancestors," and was the same with "the account of their faith, religion and doctrine given by their ministers and ecclesiastics in former ages, to several kings, princes and others, who, by virtue of their ecclesiastical or secular power, had demanded a reason thereof." The Baptists also lay claim to Wickliff, who lived in the middle of the fourteenth century; but he was so far from denying this divine rite to infants, that he even expressed many doubts whether they could be saved without it.

III. *Of the Rubrics before this Office.*

Q. What is the first rubric?

A. That the people are to be admonished, "that

or name of Baptist, is not peculiar to those who solely appropriate it to themselves: it equally belongs to all who receive and administer this ordinance; for the word Baptist signifies, not a *dipper*, as some pretend, but a *baptizer*, be the mode what it may. And besides, Presbyterians, and all other religious societies who admit of water baptism, do also admit of immersion as well as they.

it is most convenient that baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other holy days. Nevertheless, if necessity so require, baptism may be administered upon any other day."

Q. What is the design of this rubric?

A. It is intended, not only to prevent irregularity in the administration of baptism, but to make it as public as possible, and that all present may be both witnesses of the ceremony, and likewise be excited to renew their own solemn engagements to God.

Q. When was baptism formerly administered?

A. It appears by ancient writers that it was not commonly administered but at Easter and Whitsuntide: at Easter, in remembrance of Christ's resurrection, of which baptism is a figure; and at Whitsuntide, in remembrance of the three thousand souls baptized by the Apostles at that time. For this reason, in the western church, all who were born after Easter, were unbaptized till Whitsunday; and all who were born after Whitsunday, were reserved till the next Easter; unless some imminent danger of death hastened the administration of it; though in the eastern church the feast of Epiphany was also assigned for the administration of this sacrament, in memory of our Saviour's being, as it is supposed, baptized on that day. And about the eighth or ninth century, the time for solemn baptism was enlarged even in the Latin church, all churches being excited, by the reason of the thing, to administer baptism, as at first, at all times of the year.

Q. What is the second rubric?

A. "There shall be for every male child to be baptized, when they can be had, two god-fathers and one god-mother; and for every female child, one god-father and two god-mothers; and parents shall be admitted for sponsors, if it be desired."

Q. What is the original and antiquity of god-fathers and god-mothers?

A. The use of them in the Christian church is

derived from the Jews, as well as the initiation of infants into the church. And it is by some believed, that the witnesses mentioned by Isaiah at the naming of his son, were of the same nature with these sureties. In the primitive church they were so early, that it is no easy matter to ascertain the time of their beginning. Some of the most ancient Fathers make mention of them, and throughout all successive ages we find this custom continued, without any scruple or even interruption, till the Anabaptists raised some idle clamours against it.

Q. What is the use of god-fathers and god-mothers?

A. Since the laws of all nations, because infants cannot speak for themselves, have allowed them guardians to contract for them in secular matters; which contracts, if they be fair and beneficial, the infants must make good when they come of age; so the church allows them spiritual guardians to promise those things in their name, without which they cannot obtain salvation in the ordinary method of God's providence. And this too, at the same time, gives security to the church, that the children shall not apostatize, whence they are called *sureties;* provides monitors to every Christian, to remind him of the vow he made in their presence, whence they are called *witnesses;* and they represent the new birth, as they give the infant new and spiritual relations, whence they are styled *god-fathers* and *god-mothers.*

Q. What are the necessary qualifications of persons who are to be admitted as god-fathers and god-mothers?

A. They must be persons of honest and good repute, such as make a conscience of what they undertake, adorning that faith into which they themselves have been baptized, with every Christian grace and virtue in all holy conversation. In most churches it is required that they be actual communicants.—The church of England expressly orders

that they shall be such as have received the holy communion.

Q. What is the third rubric?

A. "When there are children to be baptized, the parents or sponsors shall give notice thereof, before the beginning of morning prayer, to the minister. And then the god-fathers and god-mothers, and the people with the children, must be ready at the font, either immediately after the last lesson at morning prayer, or else immediately after the last lesson at evening prayer, as the minister, by his discretion shall appoint," &c.

Q. Why is baptism appointed to be administered immediately after the second lesson, either at morning or evening prayer?

A. Because by that time the whole congregation is supposed to be assembled.

Q. May not this office be used in private as well as in the church?

A. By no means; since it is expressly ordered to be said at the font, in the middle of the morning or evening prayer, and supposes a congregation to be present; and particularly in one of the addresses which the minister is to use, it is very absurd for him to tell the god-fathers and god-mothers in a chamber, that they have brought the child thither to be baptized, when he himself is brought thither to baptize it. And if we advert to the practice of the primitive church, we shall find that this solemn act was never performed, except upon extraordinary occasions, without the presence of the congregation: A rule they so zealously regarded, that the Trullan council does not allow this holy sacrament to be administered even in chapels, which were appropriate or private, but only in the public or parish-churches, punishing the persons offending; the clergy with deposition, and the laity with excommunication.

Q. What is meant by the font?

A. Font, among ecclesiastical writers, means a large bason, in which water is kept for the baptizing of infants or other persons.

Q. Why are the fonts so called?

A. Most probably because baptism at the beginning of christianity was performed in fountains.

Q. Where were they at first built?

A. Near the church, in the church-porch, and afterwards, as it is now the usual custom, placed in the church itself, but still keeping the lower end, to intimate, perhaps, that baptism is the rite of admission into the Christian church.

Q. How were they formerly made?

A. In the primitive days they were very large and capacious, not only that they might comport with the general custom of those times, namely, of persons being immersed or put under water; but also the stated times of baptism returning so seldom, great numbers were usually baptized at once. In the middle of the font was always a partition, the one part for men, the other for women; that so, by being baptized asunder, they might avoid giving offence and scandal. But immersion being now so generally discontinued, the font is small, and designed only to hold a bason with water.

Q. Why are the fonts made of stone?

A. Because, says Durand, the water that typified baptism in the wilderness, flowed from a rock; and also because Christ, who gave forth the living water, is in scripture styled the corner-stone and the rock; that strong and durable foundation upon which we must build, or perish everlastingly.

IV. *Of the preliminary Question.*

Q. Why is the minister to ask "whether the child has been already baptized or no?"

A. Because baptism once rightly administered is never to be repeated: "For as there is but one Lord, and one faith, so there is but one baptism."

Q. Did the primitive Christians condemn re-baptizing?

A. Yes, positively; provided the party was bap-

tized by a regularly ordained minister, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Q. Is the baptizing again of those who have been baptized by laymen, a repetition of Christian baptism?

A. No; because such baptisms have not been performed in a Christian manner, that is, as Christ has ordained, in the unity of his church, by persons duly authorized to administer the same.

Q. But are there not cases of necessity which will justify the baptism of laymen, and even of women?

A. No; for that would be to suppose that Christ had made us a vain promise, Matt. xvi. 18, and that he was not able to fulfil his word, Matt. xxviii. 20.

V. *Of the Exhortation.*

Q. What follows the preliminary question?

A. An exhortation to prayer, addressed not only to the sureties, but to the whole congregation present.

Q. Why does the minister style them, "Dearly beloved?"

A. Because they are all supposed to be Christians.

Q. Why does he invite them to join with him in this solemn duty?

A. Because they were once in the same condition, and stood in need of the same charity themselves.

Q. What does the church regard as the foundation of infant baptism?

A. The consideration of that sin in which they are conceived and born, which, although arrogantly denied by the old Pelagians, and their revived issue the Socinians, is yet affirmed in scripture, Psalm li. 1. Rom. v. 12, 18. Job xiv. 5. and was observed by the light of nature among the heathen; believed also by the Jews, and by all true Christians; and, indeed, it has a strong witness in every man's own breast; for all men are inclined to sin, in opposition to their reason and judgment.

Q. Why was it necessary thus to establish this doctrine?

A. Because the denial of original sin has generally been succeeded by the contempt of infant baptism.

VI. *Of the two first Prayers.*

Q. What follows the exhortation?

A. One of two prayers; in the first of which we commemorate how God typified this salvation, that he now gives by baptism, in saving Noah and his family by water, and carrying the Israelites safe through the Red Sea; as also how Christ himself, by being baptized, sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin: and upon these grounds we pray, that God would wash and sanctify this child, that it may be delivered from his wrath, received into the ark of his church, and so filled with grace as to live holy here, and be happy hereafter: And in the second prayer, to express our earnestness and importunity, we make a solemn address to God, that this child may be pardoned and regenerated; and also, that it may be adopted and accepted by the Almighty.

VII. *Of the Gospel.*

Q. What follows the above mentioned prayers?

A. The gospel, which the minister is directed to read to the people, or else to pass on to the questions addressed to the sponsors; and from thence to the prayer immediately before the immersion, or the pouring of water on the infant. But, in every church, the intermediate parts of the service are to be used once at least in every month, if there be a baptism, for the better instructing of the people in the grounds of infant baptism.

Q. Whence is this portion of scripture taken?

A. From the tenth chapter of St. Mark's gospel;

which was anciently applied to the sacrament of baptism. In making a covenant the express consent of both parties is required; and, therefore, the covenant of baptism being now to be made between Almighty God and the child to be baptized, it is reasonable, that before the sureties engage in behalf of the infant, they should have some comfortable assurances, that God on his part will be pleased to consent to and make good the agreement. For their satisfaction, therefore, the priest, who is God's ambassador, produces a warrant from scripture, the declaration of his will, whereby it appears that God is willing to receive infants into his favour, and has, by Jesus Christ, declared them capable of that grace and glory, which, on the part of God, are promised in this baptismal covenant; wherefore the sureties need not scruple to make the stipulation on their part, since they have God's own word, that there is no impediment in children to render them incapable of receiving that which he has promised, and will surely perform.

VIII. *Of the Exhortation after the Gospel.*

Q. What follows the gospel?

A. A brief exhortation deduced from it, wherein the church endeavours to convince the sureties, and to fortify the minds of such as, by the arguments of Anabaptists, are in doubt of the lawfulness of infant baptism, that they may cheerfully promise that which belongs to their part, since God by his Son has given sufficient assurance that his part shall be accomplished. But as this assurance proceeds from God's mercy and goodness, and not from any merits or deserts in us, it is fit it should be acknowledged in an humble manner.

IX. *Of the Thanksgiving.*

Q. What follows the exhortation after the gospel?

A. A thanksgiving for our own call to the knowledge of God and faith in him, which we are put in

mind of on this occasion: and in this thanksgiving, we beg of God to give a new instance of his goodness to us, by increasing our knowledge, confirming our faith, and giving his holy Spirit to the infant now to be baptized, that so it may be born again, and made an heir of everlasting salvation.

Q. Is it proper to thank God that we are Christians?

A. Yes, undoubtedly. Plato is said to have blessed the gods that he was a man, not a beast; a Grecian, not a Barbarian; and an Athenian amongst the Grecians: the Jews are accustomed to praise the Lord every day, that they are born of the stock of Israel, and are within the covenant of Abraham. But we have much more reason to give thanks to our heavenly Father, who has made known to us the grace of his gospel, taught us the true catholic faith, and made us his children by adoption.

X. *Of the Preface to the Covenant.*

Q. What follows next?

A. The preface to the covenant; for no doubt remaining but that God is ready and willing to perform his part of the covenant, as soon as the child shall promise to fulfil his, the minister addresses himself to the god-fathers and god-mothers to promise for the child; and from them he takes security, that the infant shall observe the conditions required of him.

Q. But is not this custom of god-fathers and god-mothers promising for infants a new and strange custom?

A. No, but very ancient;* a custom indeed of

* Higinus, bishop of Rome, and martyr, speaks of god-fathers and god-mothers in his fifth Decretal; he lived but 140 years after Christ's incarnation; and the best reformed churches in Christendom do allow of them. A learned doctor of Germany defends this use upon these reasons: "1. It is not against the scriptures. 2. It is most ancient. 3. It proceeds from love

so great antiquity that it is hard to trace the original of it. A learned arch-bishop of Canterbury observes, that it seems to have been in use in the times of the Apostles. And besides, it is a very charitable custom, and such as tends to the real benefit of children; for "godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and also of that which is to come." Neither is there any thing in this custom that is not used in almost every contract. By an old law of the Romans, all magistrates were obliged, within five days after admission to their office, to take an oath to observe the laws. It happened that C. Valerius Flaccus was chosen Ædile: but he being Jupiter's high priest, could not be admitted by the Romans to swear, their laws supposing that so sacred a person would voluntarily do what an oath would oblige him to. Caius Valerius, however, desired that his brother, as his proxy, might be sworn in his stead. To this the commons agreed, and passed an act that it should be all the same as if the Ædile had sworn himself. Much after the same manner, when kings are crowned in their infancy, some of their nobility who are deputed to represent them, take the usual oaths. The same do ambassadors for their principals at the ratification of treaties; and guardians for their minors, who are bound by the laws to fulfil what is contracted for them. Since, then, all nations and orders of men have sanctioned this method, it cannot, with any reason, be charged as a fault upon our church, that she admits infants to baptism by sponsors undertaking for them.

of the parents procuring them, of them, undertaking. 4. It is to the benefit of the infant if the parents die. 5. It is an help to the parents." Zanch. in Eph. p. 580. To which may be added, that it is a means to increase mutual love amongst neighbours, when they shall mutually perform this duty one for another.

XI. *Of the Interrogatories and Answers.*

Q. What follows the preface to the covenant?

A. The immediate stipulation, which is drawn up by way of question and answer, and which seems to have been the method even in the days of the Apostles; for St. Peter calls baptism the answer of a good conscience; and in the primitive church, queries were always put to the persons baptized, who answered themselves, and children by their representatives, who are, therefore, to answer in the first person, as the advocate speaks in the person of the client, *I renounce*, &c. because the contract is properly made with the child.

Q. What is the nature of the baptismal covenant?

A. The same in a spiritual sense as an indenture or an enlistment is in a temporal; a particular contract or stipulation between two parties, wherein the one party engages to bestow on the other peculiar benefits and privileges, upon certain conditions to be performed.

Q. How many queries are there proposed to the god-fathers and god-mothers?

A. Four; which are very suitable and proper.

Q. What is the first question?

A. "Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all the covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh;* so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?"

* That is, Dost thou, in the name of this child, renounce that uncovenanted state into which thou wast born; that state of nature, by virtue of which, according to St. Paul, thou art a child of wrath; and wilt thou come into covenant with God? So that the child is no sooner given into the arms of the minister, than this promise, so far forth as it represents the renunciation of the devil, the world, and the flesh, is fulfilled on the part of the sponsors.

Q. What is the answer to this question?

A. "I renounce them all; and, by God's help, will endeavour not to follow nor be led by them."

Q. What do we learn from hence?

A. That though the question is put positively, and without any reserve, as the nature of the thing requires; yet the answer is given conditionally, and in such a manner, as that nothing but the height of ignorance, or the most inveterate malice could have caused people to object, as some do, that our church makes sponsors promise more than they can perform.

Q. Why is it necessary for sponsors to make this promise?

A. Because, when we enter into covenant with God, we must have the same friends and enemies he has; especially when the same who are enemies to him are enemies to our salvation. And, therefore, since children are by nature the slaves of the devil, and though they have not yet been actually in his service, will, nevertheless, be apt to be drawn into it by the pomps and glory of the world, and the carnal desires of the flesh, it is requisite they should, in early life, be dedicated to God, and be educated in his service.

Q. Why does the minister introduce these questions with these words, I DEMAND, THEREFORE?

A. To assert that authority which God has given him to act in his stead; and to take proper security in his name.

Q. What is the second question?

A. "Dost thou believe all the articles of the Christian faith, as contained in the Apostles' creed?" —To which the answer is, "I do."

Q. Why does the minister inquire concerning their faith?

A. Because faith is a necessary qualification for baptism: and, therefore, before Philip would baptize the eunuch, he asked him "if he believed with all his heart?" and received this answer, that he

believed Jesus to be the Son of God. From which remarkable precedent, the church has ever since demanded of all those who enter into the Christian profession, if they believe all the articles which are implied in that profession. This was done either by way of question and answer, or the party baptized, if of age, was made to repeat the whole creed.

Q. What is the third question put to the sponsors?

A. "Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?"—To which the sponsors answer, "That is my desire."

Q. Why is this question put to the sponsors?

A. Because it is not only necessary that the party to be baptized believe the Christian faith, but he must also desire to be joined to that society by the solemn rite of initiation.

Q. Why does the minister further demand, whether they are willing to be baptized in this faith?

A. Because God will have no unwilling servants, nor ought men to be compelled by violence to religion. And yet the Christian religion is so reasonable and profitable both as to this world and the next, that the god-fathers may very well presume to answer for the child, that this is his desire; since, if the child could understand the excellency of this religion, and speak its mind, it would, without doubt, be ready to make the same reply.

Q. What is the last question?

A. "Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?"

Q. What is the answer?

A. "I will, by God's help;" which shows, that we do not resolve in our own strength, but in the strength of God. For it is "He that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." By his preventing grace he gives us the will, by his assisting grace he gives us strength and power, and by his consummating grace he gives us the act or accomplishment.

Q. Why is this question proposed to the child?

A. Because St. Paul tells us, that they who are baptized must walk in newness of life. And since he now takes Christ for his Lord and Master, and enlists under his banner, it is proper he should vow, in the words of this sacrament, to observe the commands of the captain of his salvation. Wherefore, as he promised to forsake all evil before, so now he must engage to do all that is good, without which he cannot be a real member of the Christian church.

Q. Since this whole stipulation is so exactly conformable to that which was used in the primitive church, I desire you to compare them.

A. In ancient times, all who were to be baptized were brought to the entrance of the baptistery or font, and standing with their faces towards the west, (which being directly opposite to the east, the place of light, did symbolically represent the prince of darkness, whom they were to renounce) were commanded to stretch out their hands as it were in defiance of him; and then the bishop asked them severally, "Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, powers, and service?" To which each party answered, "I do renounce them."—"Dost thou renounce the world, and all its pomps and vanities?" Answer, "I do renounce them." They then made an open profession of their faith, the bishop asking, "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, &c. in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who, &c? Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, in the holy catholic church, and in one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and the life everlasting?" To all which each party answered, "I do believe;" as our church still requires in this office.

XII. *Of the Prayers for the Sanctification of the Child.*

Q. What follow the interrogatories and answers?

A. Four short petitions for the child's sanctifica-

tion; for the contract being now made, it is proper the minister should more peculiarly intercede with God for grace to perform it.

Q. What is the first of these collects?

A. A petition for regeneration, taken out of Romans vi. 4, 5, 6; where the Apostle teaches us, that a principal end of baptism is for the mortifying of *the old man*;* that is, for the destruction of original corruption, and the extirpation of all evil concupiscence, which, when it is slain and buried as it were, then the new man, that is, a gracious disposition, succeeds, by the Spirit's entering into us: And as of old the baptized persons were plunged over the head, and came up again like new persons, as Jesus out of his grave after his resurrection, so we pray, according to the ancient phrase, that the old Adam or corrupt nature in this child may be so mortified, that the new nature may appear in it; that is, that it may be born again in this laver of regeneration, and not only have the guilt, but the power also of original corruption taken away.

Q. What do we pray for in the second collect?

A. That all carnal affections, which spring from original sin, and are the branches and fruit of that root of bitterness, may be destroyed; and that all spiritual affections, heavenly desires, holy purposes, and divine love, may be planted, and live, and grow in their stead.

Q. What do we pray for in the third collect?

A. For spiritual strength, that the child to be baptized may triumph over those enemies which it has now defied.—It seems indeed, an unequal match for a frail mortal to contend with the flesh within, the devil without, and the world round

* This term is more warrantable from scripture than the scholastic expression of *original sin*, which is used in some places to denote that earthliness and inclination to evil which we are prone to. In other respects, likewise, these aspirations breathe a most pious, benevolent, and truly Christian spirit.

about him; but Christ has overcome the world, John xvi. 33; and if we use the grace he gives us in baptism to subdue the flesh, and defeat the devil, and our corruptions join not with him, he cannot harm us. It becomes sponsors to take the shield of faith, and to follow their victorious Leader, that they may be conquerors themselves, and then they may also pray the more confidently for the baptized infant.

Q. What do we pray for in the last collect?

A. That this child, and all others to whom this salutary rite shall be administered, may not only cease to do evil, but learn to do well; may not only escape the pollutions of the world, but may add to their faith, virtue—we pray that they may be endued with grace and heavenly qualities, and obtain eternal life.

XIII. *Of the Prayer of Consecration.*

Q. What follows the prayer for the sanctification of the child?

A. A prayer for the consecration of the water; for though it is true that our Lord sanctified water to the mystical washing away of sin, yet, when this particular water is to be used in so sacred a ministry, and for such admirable purposes, it is necessary it should be sanctified by the word of God and prayer, 1 Tim. iv. 5; that is, by repeating the words of Christ, and by petitioning for the descent of the Holy Spirit, which are the two parts of this prayer.

Q. But why do we consecrate the water, when we have no express command in scripture for it?

A. St. Basil says, we "do this, as well as many other weighty things, because of the constant tradition and continual practice of the church," which is a sufficient warrant in a matter so reasonable and pious as this. That the primitive Christians always used a prayer for the consecrating of the water, is

evident from the testimony of St. Cyprian, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and a cloud of other witnesses.

Q. What is meant by the clause wherein we invoke the Spirit to sanctify the water to the mystical washing away of sin?

A. Not that the water contracts any new quality in its nature or essence, by such consecration; but only that it is sanctified or made holy in its use, and separated from a common to a sacred purpose.

XIV. *Of the Naming of the Child.*

Q. What follows the prayer for the consecration of the water?

A. The naming of the child; for the Christian name being given as a badge that we belong to Christ, we cannot more properly take it upon us, than when we are enlisted under his banner. We bring our one name into the world with us, which we derive from our parents, and which may bring to our remembrance our original guilt, that we are born in sin: but this name is given us at our baptism, to remind us of our new birth, when being washed in the laver of regeneration, we are thereby cleansed from the natural impurities, become in a manner new creatures, and solemnly dedicate ourselves to God. That the Jews named their children at the time of circumcision, the holy scriptures, as well as their own writers, expressly inform us. And though the rite of circumcision was changed into that of baptism by our Saviour, yet he made no alteration as to the time and custom of giving the name, but left that to continue under the new, as it had obtained under the old dispensation.

Q. What does the minister's taking the child into his arms remind us of?

A. Of the mercy of Jesus, who, in like manner, embraced the little children who were brought to him, and that we may reasonably hope he will as

lovingly receive the soul of this child, as the minister does the body.

Q. Who is to name the child to the minister?

A. The god-fathers and god-mothers; for though the name may be privately resolved upon by the relations, as was the custom of old, yet the rubric directs that it be dictated by the sponsors.

Q. By whom were heathen names prohibited to Christians?

A. By the Nicene council, which recommends the giving of the name of some Apostle or Saint; not because there is any merit in the name itself, but that, by such means, the party might be excited to imitate the example of that holy person whose name he bears.

XV. *Of the Form of Baptism.*

Q. What follows the naming of the child?

A. The form or outward sign in baptism; in the performance of which are three things to be considered: first, the person who baptizeth; secondly, the words; and thirdly, the actions used in baptizing.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the person?

A. What has been already noted, that he who baptizes ought to be a lawful minister; for Christ gave this commission only to the Apostles, and their successors, with the gracious promise of being with them in the exercise of it, to the end of the world.

Q. But ought not lay persons to baptize in cases of necessity?

A. No; for we must reasonably suppose that the salvation of the child will be as safe through God's mercy without baptism, as with that which is not commanded by him, and to which he has made no promises: so that where baptism cannot be duly administered, it will be prudent to omit it.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the words?

A. That the words, "I baptize thee," &c. were the form of the western church, and always suppose a lawful minister to be the person who uses them. The eastern church has a little variation, "Let N. be baptized," &c. but the sense is much the same: however, in the next words, "In the name of the Father," &c. all orthodox Christians have ever agreed, because they are of Christ's own appointment, and unalterable; wherefore, when heretics* presumed to vary from this form, they were censured by the church, and those baptisms declared null which were not ministered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It must be acknowledged there were words put in to explain, not to vary the sense. And the orthodox took liberty to mingle a paraphrase with them; yet surely it is more prudently done of our church, to preserve the words of our Lord entire without any alteration or diminution.

Q. What is meant by being baptized in the name of three Persons?

A. It means that it is not only done by the commission and authority of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but also that we are baptized into the faith of the Holy Trinity, and are received into that society of men who are distinguished from Jews and Turks, Heathens and all false professions in the world, by believing in three persons and one God: this is the great fundamental article on which all the other articles of religion depend, and to which they may be referred; so that our being baptized into the Trinity, is an argument that we are Christians, and in the possession of the religion taught by Jesus Christ.

* Theophranius and Eutychius are reported to have used this form in baptizing, viz. "I baptize thee into the death of Jesus Christ." And Valentinus, another ancient heretic, baptized "in the name of the unknown God, and of the truth, the mother of all." Euseb. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 11.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the actions used in baptism?

A. That the minister, naming the child after the god-fathers and god-mothers, is to dip it in the water discreetly, or to pour water on it.*

Q. Why has our church made these outward signs indifferent?

A. Because she supposes that God will have mercy and not sacrifice; and that the divine grace is not measured by the quantity of water used in the administration of this ordinance, but by the temper and disposition of the recipient.

Q. Did the primitive Christians understand it in this latitude?

A. Yes; as is plain from their administering this holy sacrament in the cases of sickness, haste, or want of water, by affusion, or pouring water upon the face. Thus the jailer and his family, who were baptized by St. Paul in haste, the same hour of the night that they were converted, are reasonably supposed to have been baptized by affusion; as it can hardly be thought that on such an exigency they had sufficient water to be immersed in. The same may be said concerning Basilides, who, Eusebius tells us, was baptized by some brethren in prison. For the strict custody under which Christian prisoners were kept (their tyrannical jailers hardly allowing them necessaries for life, much less such conveniences as they desired for their religion), makes

* Isaiah lii. 15. "So shall he sprinkle many nations." Ezekiel xxxvi. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean."—Some authors affirm, "that if the manner of baptism be absolutely necessary, then those who pour or sprinkle have it nearer than those who dip. For the original, say they, does not signify to *dip*; as the inspired writers of the New Testament have used it, it is another word. See John xii. 26.—εμ βαπλας το ψωμίον. This, with the general acceptation of the word among Grecian authors, shows that it signifies only a bare and slight washing. Plunging and washing are very distinct." See Exod. xv. 4, 5.

it more than probable that this must have been done by affusion only. And that baptism in this way was no novel practice, may be gathered from Tertullian, who, speaking of a person of uncertain repentance offering himself to be baptized, asks, "Who would help him to a single drop of water?" The acts also of St. Laurence, who suffered martyrdom about the same time as St. Cyprian, tell us, that a soldier who was to be one of his executioners being converted, brought a pitcher of water to St. Laurence to baptize him. And further, St. Cyprian, being consulted by one Magnus with respect to the validity of Clinick baptism, that is, such as was administered to sick persons on their beds, by aspersion or sprinkling, not only allows, but pleads for it at large, both from the nature of the sacrament and design of the institution.

Q. What was the practice of the primitive Christians in baptizing?

A. To dip the person thrice,* that is, once at the name in each person in the Trinity, the more fully to express that sacred mystery; though some later writers say this was done to represent the death, burial, and resurrection of our Saviour, together with his three days continuance in the grave. St. Augustine gives both these reasons, as a double mystery of this ancient rite, as he is cited by Gratien. Several of the Fathers, who make mention of this custom, own, that there is no command for it in scripture; but then they speak of it as brought into use by the Apostles; and the fiftieth of the *canons* called apostolical, deposed any bishop or presbyter who should administer baptism without this form.

Q. Why was this custom discontinued?

A. Because the Arians took advantage of it, by persuading the people, that it was used to denote that the persons in the Trinity were three distinct

* Tertullian and Cyprian were strenuous for this custom.

substances; and, therefore, it first became a custom, and then a law, in the Spanish church, only to use one single immersion, because that would express the unity of the God-head, while the Trinity of persons would be sufficiently denoted, by the persons being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. However, in other parts of the church, *trine immersion* most commonly prevailed, as it does in the Greek church to this very day.

XVI. *Of the Reception of the Child into the Church.*

Q. What follows the dipping or pouring water upon the child?

A. The reception of it into the church; for the child, being baptized, is become a member of the Christian church, into which the minister, as a steward of God's family, does solemnly receive it; and for the clearer manifestation that it belongs to Christ, signs it in the forehead with the sign of the cross.

Q. What is the antiquity and meaning of the sign of the cross?

A. The antiquity of it is mentioned by several of the primitive Fathers* of the church; and that it was used in baptism seems to be very evident; for Lanctantius, speaking of the converted heathens, says, "they came under the wings of Jesus, and did receive his great and noble sign upon their foreheads; which, like the blood on the lintel, causeth the destroying angel to pass over; and he expressly calls a Christian one who hath a signed forehead. And St. Basil tells us, that "an ecclesiastical con-

* Tertullian says, that "whensoever we go out, or come in, or whatsoever we are conversant about, we sign our foreheads with the sign of the cross: And if you require a law of scripture for this observation, you will find none. Tradition will be alleged as the author, and custom the confirmer of it." De Coron. Mil. c. 3, 4.

stitution had prevailed from the Apostles' days, that those who believed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, should be signed with the sign of the cross." St. Chrysostom makes it the glory of Christians, that they carry in their foreheads the sign of the cross. And St. Austin, speaking to one who was going to be baptized, tells him, that he was "that day to be signed with the sign of the cross, with which all Christians were signed;" that is, at their baptism. As to the meaning of the ceremony, it signifies our consignment to Christ; whence it is often called by the ancient Fathers, "The Lord's signet, and Christ's seal." And how commendable is it to retain this practice, as a token that this child shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and that he has now enlisted under Christ's banner, and hath engaged to fight against all his spiritual enemies under this victorious Leader!

Q. Why is the cross made after baptism?

A. That none may charge us with making the ceremony essential to baptism, which is finished before the cross is made, and which is esteemed not at all deficient when baptism is celebrated without it: and, indeed, our church has given express permission, that "if those who present the infant shall desire the sign of the cross to be omitted, although the church knows no worthy cause of scruple concerning the same, yet in that case, the minister may omit it."

XVII. *Of the Exhortation after Baptism.*

Q. What follows the reception of the child into the church?

A. A serious exhortation, in which the minister teaches us, what must be the subject of our ensuing praises and petitions.

Q. What does the minister mean when he says, This child is regenerate?

A. He means that it is baptized and engrafted

into the body of Christ's church; and for these benefits he exhorts us to thank God, which is very reasonable, and our bounden duty; for if we consider it a matter of joy, that a child is born into the world to partake of the benefits of a natural life, it is certainly much more so, when he is born out of the world, into the Christian church, to partake of the benefits of a spiritual life.

XVIII. *Of the Lord's Prayer.*

Q. What follows the exhortation?

A. The Lord's prayer; which, as has been already observed, was prescribed by our Saviour to his disciples, as a badge of their belonging to him; and, therefore, it never can be more proper to use it than now, when a new member and disciple is admitted into his church. And for this reason, that whereas in other offices this prayer is generally placed in the beginning, it is here reserved till after the child shall be baptized, and received solemnly into the church; when we can more properly call God, *Our Father*, with respect to the infant, who is now by baptism made a member of Christ, and more peculiarly adopted as a child of God. And this is conformable to the primitive church: for the Catechumens were never allowed to use this prayer, till they had become sons of God by regeneration in the waters of baptism. Whence this prayer was frequently, by the ancient writers, called, "the prayer of the regenerate," as being their privilege and birth-right.

XIX. *Of the Collect.*

Q. What follows the Lord's prayer?

A. A prayer, wherein we first give God thanks for affording this child the benefits of baptismal re-

generation;* and then we pray for God's grace to assist the child through the whole course of his life.

XX. *Of the Exhortation to the God-Fathers and God-Mothers.*

Q. How do we conclude this solemn rite?

A. By a suitable exhortation to the god-fathers and god-mothers; for nothing tends more directly to the security of religion and holiness, than a conscientious performance of this solemn vow of baptism. In the first ages of christianity, when people of discretion were baptized, the exhortation was addressed to the persons themselves, as it now is in our office of baptism for those of riper years; but since children are at present the subjects of baptism, and are not capable of admonition, a serious and earnest exhortation is here made to the sureties; which, if it be well considered, will show how sinful it is for any to undertake this trust merely in compliment, without a design to fulfil it. But this evil would be prevented, were sureties to do their duty, by labouring to prepare children for confirmation, and causing them to receive it; which the minister, in the last place, enjoins the sureties to do; for till the child, by this means, takes his baptismal vows upon himself, the sureties must answer for all his errors and vices through their neglect; but when the child is confirmed, they are freed from their obligations to him, except the duty of charity, or that which pertains to them as Christians.

* I here recommend to the serious perusal of my reader an excellent *Sermon on Regeneration*, by Dr. Waterland, who may justly be styled, *the Demosthenes of the Church of England;* and also an excellent sermon by bishop Moore, of New-York, on the same subject.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Ministration of private Baptism of Children in Houses.

MARK X. 14.

For of such is the kingdom of God.

I. *Of the Rubrics before the Office.*

Q. WHAT *is to be treated of in this chapter?*

A. Such particulars as are different from the order for public baptism of infants; for where this office agrees with the former, the reader must be referred to the next preceding chapter.

Q. What does the first rubric require?

A. That "the minister of every parish shall often admonish the people, that they defer not the baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth, or other holy day falling between, unless upon a great and reasonable cause."

Q. Why is the church so intent upon the baptism of infants?

A. Because this sacrament is ordained by Jesus Christ, as the only means, in the ordinary way, for receiving the first justification, by which we are delivered from original sin, and partake of the merits of Christ's sufferings, so as to become members of his body.

Q. How does this appear from scripture?

A. From the express declaration of our Saviour, in his conversation with Nicodemus; for, says he, "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and a little after he shows how this new birth is bestowed upon us. "Verily,

verily, I say unto thee, except a man* be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Q. What is required in the second rubric?

A. That "also they shall warn them, that without like great cause and necessity, they procure not their children to be baptized at home in their houses."

Q. Why is the church so averse to private baptism, except in cases of necessity?

A. Because it is contrary to the reason, and the plain design of the institution of this sacrament; for the end of this sacred ordinance is to initiate the child into the church of Christ, and to entitle him to the privileges of it; and, therefore, there can be no better representation of that society, than in a congregation assembled after the most solemn and public manner for the worship of God. Nowhere can the profession be more properly made of such initiation, or the stipulation be given, or the promise entered into to undertake the duties of a Christian, than in such an assembly of Christians. But how can all this be so properly done, without any timely notice or preparation, in private, and in the presence only of two or three, or so few that they can hardly be called a congregation? The ordinance is certainly public; public in the end and nature of it, and therefore such ought the celebration of it to be; the neglect whereof is the less excusable, because it is so easily remedied.

Q. But if necessity shall require them so to do, how is baptism to be administered?

A. The rubric says, "Let the minister of the parish, (or, in his absence, any other lawful minister that

* In the original, it is ἐὰν μή τις, *except any one*, that is, man, woman, or child; which strikes at the very root of that modern and heterodox opinion, which denies baptism to infants, in opposition to the practice of all good Christians in all ages from the Apostles.

can be procured) with those who are present, call upon God, and say the Lord's prayer, and so many of the collects appointed to be said before in the form of public baptism, as the time and present exigence will suffer. And then the child being named by some one who is present, the minister shall pour water upon it, saying," &c.

Q. What do we learn from this permission in cases of necessity?

A. That the moderation of our church in this respect is conformable to the practice of the primitive Christians; who, though in ordinary cases they would not admit that baptism should be administered without the presence of the congregation, yet had so great a care that none should die unbaptized, that in danger of death they allowed such as had gone through all their baptismal preparations, to be baptized at home; but enjoined them to answer publicly more fully if God restored them to health.

Q. Why does the rubric particularly mention "any other lawful minister?"

A. Because the church is assured that the person by whom baptism is to be administered, is plainly as positive a part of the institution as any thing relating to this ordinance; and, consequently, that the power of administering it must belong to one whom Christ has authorized by the institution; and therefore, it is a great presumption for any person to invade the ministerial office, without this divine warrant.

Q. What constitutes a lawful minister for the administration of this ordinance?

A. Episcopal ordination;* for, says our blessed

* As our blessed Saviour commissioned his Apostles, and only them and their successors, to the end of the world, to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; so we conclude, that none can at this time have any such authority to baptize, but those who are episcopally ordained. For giving a commission for a man to do that which he has no natural right to do, does, in the very nature of

Saviour, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." And St. Paul declares, that "no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." But all antiquity concurs in this assertion, that there ever were in the Christian church, by the appointment of Christ and his Apostles, three distinct orders of clergy; namely, bishops, priests, and deacons; and that the power of ordination belongs only to the first of these three orders; which shows, that persons ordained by either of the two inferior orders; namely, priests or deacons, or by the brotherhood, are not, nor can they, according to scripture and the usage of the church, be proper ministers of this sacred rite.

II. *Of the Service to be performed at the Ministration of private Baptism.*

Q. What prayers are to be used at the baptism of the child?

A. First, the Lord's prayer, which ought never to be omitted when we call upon God, as we profess ourselves to be the disciples of Christ: And, secondly, so many of the collects appointed to be said before in the form of public baptism, as the time and present exigence will permit; and then, after the child is baptized, it is farther ordered, that the minister shall give thanks to God, in the form appointed to be used after the administration of public baptism.

Q. What ought to be observed concerning the prayer for the consecration of the water?

A. That it should never be omitted; for, besides the propriety of it to beg a blessing upon the administration in general, it is so necessary a part of

the thing, exclude all to whom the commission is not given. And no man can have a natural right to administer Christian baptism, because it is not a natural but a supernatural performance, for the conveyance of supernatural grace.

the office of baptism, that the primitive Christians thought the consecration of the water ought never to be dispensed with.

Q. Why is the child to be baptized by affusion only?

A. Because baptism in private being never allowed but when the child is weak, it is justly supposed that it would not be able to endure dipping.

III. *Of the Service to be performed when the Child is brought to Church.*

Q. What does the church say of private baptism?

A. That the "child so baptized," that is, in the manner above mentioned, is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again. Yet, nevertheless, if the child thus baptized shall live, it is expedient that it be brought into the church, to the intent that if the minister of the same parish did himself baptize that child, the congregation may be certified of the true form of baptism by him privately before used.

Q. But if the child was baptized by any other lawful minister, what does the rubric then direct?

A. That the minister of the parish where the child was christened, shall examine whether the same has been lawfully done; and if the minister shall find, by the answers of such as bring the child, that it was duly baptized, then shall he not christen it, but receive it as a member of the true Christian church.

Q. After the minister has certified the people that the child was lawfully baptized, and declared the benefits which it has received by virtue of its baptism, what is the next thing required?

A. The minister is directed to proceed in much the same manner or form as is appointed for public baptism. He is to read the gospel therein appointed, and the exhortation that follows it; and then to repeat the Lord's prayer. It is, however, to be

noted, that the gospel, exhortation, and the Lord's prayer may here be omitted; in which case the minister is to pass on to the questions addressed to the sponsors, after first making the necessary certification to the people. Then demanding the name of the child, he is to proceed to examine the god-fathers and god-mothers, whether, in the name of the child, they renounce the devil and all his works, &c. whether they believe all the articles of the Christian faith, and whether they will obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, &c. For though the child was baptized without sponsors, it is reasonable there should now be some to give security that it shall be well educated and instructed. When this is done, the child is received into the congregation of Christ's flock, and is signed with the sign of the cross. After which the service concludes with the thanksgiving and exhortation, which also close the office for public baptism.

NOTE. "The same rule is to be observed here, as to the omission of the sign of the cross, as in the public baptism of infants;" and for the same reason.

Q. What is the method of proceeding, if this baptism is doubtful?

A. The minister is to baptize the child in the form as before appointed for the public baptism of infants; saying, that at the dipping of the child in the font, he shall use this form of words: "If thou art not already baptized, N. I baptize thee in the name of the Father, &c.

CHAPTER IX.

Of the Ministration of Baptism to such as are of riper Years, and able to answer for themselves.

ACTS viii. 36, 37.

And the eunuch said, See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.

Q. WHAT *is to be treated of in this chapter?*

A. Of such particulars in the form of adult baptism, as differ from the forms of infant baptism treated of in the next two preceding chapters.

Q. *Why does the church require, when any such persons as are of riper years are to be baptized, that timely notice shall be given to the minister?*

A. "That so due care may be taken of their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian religion; and that they be exhorted to prepare themselves with prayer and fasting, for the receiving of this holy sacrament;" which were always strictly enjoined those who were baptized in the primitive church.

Q. *And if the candidates for baptism shall be found fit, what follows?*

A. The minister is to baptize them in the same manner and order as is appointed before for the baptism of infants; except that the gospel is concerning the necessity of baptism, which is followed by a suitable exhortation. And because the persons to be baptized are to make the profession that is requisite in their own persons, therefore the minister is ordered to put the questions to them. There are god-fathers and god-mothers, indeed, appointed to be present; but they are only designed as witnesses of the engagement, and undertake no more than to remind the baptized hereafter of the vow and pro-

fession which they made in their presence, and to call upon them to be diligent in instructing themselves in God's word, &c. the chief part of the charge being delivered at last by the minister to the persons who receive baptism.

Q. What does the church deem expedient for every person thus baptized?

A. That they "should be confirmed by the bishop so soon after baptism as conveniently may be; that they may be admitted to the holy communion."

Q. What does the rubric direct concerning the baptism of adults in cases of necessity?

A. That "whereas necessity may require the baptizing of adults in private houses, in consideration of extreme sickness, the same is hereby allowed in that case. And a convenient number of persons shall be assembled in the house where the sacrament is to be performed. And in the exhortation, *Well-beloved*, &c. instead of these words, *come hither desiring*, shall be inserted this word, *desirous*."

Q. "*If there be occasion for the office of infant baptism and that of adults at the same time,*" *how is the minister to proceed?*

A. He is to "use the exhortation, and one of the prayers next following in the office for adults; only, in the exhortation and prayer, after the words, *these persons*, and, *these thy servants*, adding, *and these infants*. Then the minister shall proceed to the questions to be demanded in the cases respectively. After the immersion or pouring of water, the prayer shall be as in this service; only after the words, *these persons*, shall be added, *these infants*. After which, the remaining part of each service shall be used; first, that for adults; and, lastly, that for infants.

Q. "*If any persons, not baptized in their infancy, shall be brought to be baptized before they come to years of discretion to answer for themselves,*" *in what manner may their baptism be performed?*

A. "It may suffice to use the office for public

baptism of infants; or, in case of extreme danger, the office for private baptism; only changing the word *infant*, for child, or person, as occasion requireth."

CHAPTER X.

Of the Catechism.

PROVERBS xxii. 6.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.

I. *Of the Catechism in general.*

Q. BY *whom was catechising, or instructing children and others in the principles of religion, instituted?*

A. By God himself, as we read, Deut. vi. 7, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

Q. *Has this been the universal practice of the church?*

A. Yes, both among Jews and Christians, in all ages.

Q. *What does Josephus tell us concerning the Jews?*

A. That they were above all things careful that their children should be instructed in the principles of their religion.

Q. *In what manner were they taught?*

A. They had in every village a person whose business it was to teach children the law till they were ten years old, and from thence till they were thirteen they instructed them in the Talmud.

Q. *What was this person called?*

A. "The instructor of babes."

*Q. What does Grotius tell us respecting the Jewish children?**

A. That at the age of thirteen they were brought to the house of God to be publicly examined; and, being approved, were then declared to be children of the precept.

Q. What mean you by children of the precept?

A. Such children as were obliged to observe the 613 precepts, which contained the substance of the Mosaic law, and formed a summary of the Jewish religion; and were from thenceforth answerable for their own sins.

Q. How was this custom perpetuated?

A. From the Jews it was delivered to the Christians, who had in every church a peculiar officer to instruct the catechumens in the fundamentals of religion.

Q. What was this officer called?

A. A Catechist.

Q. How long were the catechumens instructed in this manner?

A. Two years seem to have been the most common period, besides the more solemn catechising of them during the forty days in Lent, preparatory to their baptism at Easter.

Q. Was there any difference between the persons catechised in the first ages of the church, and those whom we now instruct?

A. Yes; for then the catechumens were generally such as were come to years of discretion, but having been born of heathen parents, were not yet baptized; so that they catechised them before their baptism, as we also do those who are not baptized till they come to riper years: Though, as to the children of believing parents, it is certain that, as they were baptized in infancy, they could not then, any more than now, be admitted catechumens till after baptism.

* In Luc. ii. ver. 22.

Q. Is it necessary to catechise children before baptism?

A. Not if we take care that due instruction be given them as soon as they are capable of receiving it afterwards.

Q. Does not our Saviour himself seem to intimate, that converts may first be entered into his church by baptism, and thereafter be instructed in the fundamentals of their religion?

A. Yes; for thus he enjoins his Apostles in his last commission, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, "Go ye, therefore, disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."

Q. Is this practice any way dissonant to the practice of the primitive church?

A. No; for they then determined, that where it was not possible to catechise them before baptism, it was sufficient to do so afterwards; as in the case of such as were hastily baptized in sickness, who, by the ancient canons, were to be instructed in the creed after baptism.

Q. What is related in particular of St. Basil?

A. That when he was baptized, the bishop kept him in his own house some time after, that he might instruct him in the things pertaining to eternal life.

Q. What is affirmed, in general, of all baptized persons in the primitive times?

A. That they used to stay several days after their baptism, to be more fully catechised in all things necessary to salvation.

Q. Have we not as good reason to instruct children after baptism now as they had adult persons then?

A. Yes, there is indeed a much greater reason, since children are incapable of being previously instructed.

II. *Of the Form and Contents of the Catechism.*

Q. What is the form of our catechism?

A. It is drawn up after the primitive manner, by way of question and answer.

Q. What does the word catechism signify?

A. An instruction first taught and instilled into a person, and then repeated upon the catechist's examination.

Q. Have we any precedents of this kind?

A. Yes; so Philip catechized the eunuch, Acts viii. 37; and so the persons to be baptized were catechized in the first ages of the Christian church.

Q. Does not our catechism, in its contents, resemble the catechisms of the ancient church?

A. Yes; it being not a large system of divinity, but only a short and full explanation of the baptismal vow.

Q. Of what did the primitive catechisms consist?

A. Of no more than the repetition of the baptismal vow, the creed, and the Lord's prayer.

Q. How did the catechism stand immediately after the reformation in the church of England?

A. In the same manner as the primitive catechisms, only with the addition of the ten commandments.

Q. Was it afterwards thought to be defective?

A. It was thought to be so with respect to the sacraments, which in the primitive times were more largely explained to baptized persons.

Q. And did any alteration ensue?

A. Yes; the bishops were appointed to add a short and plain explanation of the sacraments, which was accordingly done in that excellent form we now possess.

Q. How is it esteemed in the opinion of the best judges?

A. To excel all catechisms that ever were writ-

ten;* it being so short that very young children may learn it by heart; and yet so full, that it contains all things necessary to be known in order to salvation.

Q. Wherein does its excellency more especially consist?

A. In this, that as all persons are baptized, not into any particular Christian church, but into the catholic or universal church of Christ; so here, they are not taught the opinion of this, or any other particular church or sect, but what the whole body of Christians agree in.

Q. Has the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States of America, adopted the catechism of the church of England?

A. Yes, only with a few verbal alterations.

III. *Of the Rubrics after the Catechism.*

Q. What does the church require of her ministers?

A. That "the minister of every parish shall diligently upon Sundays and holy days, or on some other convenient occasion, openly in the church, instruct or examine so many children of his parish, sent unto him, as he shall think convenient, in some part of this catechism."

Q. Why is the catechism to be said "publicly in the church?"

A. That persons more advanced in years, as well as the young, may receive benefit from the minister's exposition; and that servants and children may be excited by the presence of their masters and parents, to pay diligent attention to his instructions.

Q. How often is the catechism to be repeated?

A. As often as occasion requires; that is, so long

* A peculiar excellence of our public catechism is, that it does not contradict itself, or represent the Almighty Parent of the universe as acting like a partial and tyrannical being; which is more than can be said of some other catechisms.

as there are any in the congregation who are capable of instruction, and yet have not learned the catechism.

Q. What does the church require of those who have the care of children?

A. That "all fathers, mothers, masters, and mistresses shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices, who have not learned their catechism, to come to the church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear, and to be ordered by the minister, until they shall have learned all that is here appointed for them to learn."

Q. Why does the church enjoin this duty upon parents and masters?

A. From a sincere and earnest concern for the present and future welfare of her children, but chiefly their future, that of their precious and immortal souls.

Q. Why chiefly that of their souls?

A. Because they must exist for ever, and be either eternally happy or miserable in another world, according as they live and behave themselves in this.

Q. What has the neglect of the catechism produced?

A. A neglect even of religion itself, though it is the "one thing needful;" and it is also, in a great measure, the true reason why libertinism, infidelity, profaneness, and every pernicious opinion and evil practice prevail in the world, to the great scandal of christianity, and disgrace of human nature.

CHAPTER XI.

Of the Order of Confirmation, or laying on of Hands upon those that are baptized, and come to Years of discretion.*

Acts xix. 6.

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied.

I. *Of Confirmation in general.*

Q. WHAT *does the church require concerning children who have been baptized?*

A. That "so soon as children shall come to a competent age, and can say the creed, the Lord's prayer, and the ten commandments, and can answer to the other questions of the catechism, they should be brought to the bishop, to be by him confirmed, and to take their baptismal vow upon themselves.

Q. Whence did confirmation take its origin?

A. From a like usage among the Jews, who always brought their children at the age of thirteen years, to be publicly examined before the congregation, and to make a solemn promise, that they would thenceforward engage themselves faithfully to observe the law of Moses, and be accountable for their own sins; after which engagement followed the prayers of the congregation, that God would bless and enable them to make good their solemn promise.

Q. How was confirmation instituted?

A. The first converts, indeed, whom the Apostles baptized, were confirmed by the immediate hand

* The name which is given to this office is very significant in our language; and the design of it is fully illustrated in the exhortation which begins it, to the congregation in general, and to the person to be confirmed in particular.

of God, who, by miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, sealed their baptism, and attested the truth of the religion into which they had entered. But it was not long before the Apostles were appointed to minister in giving the Holy Spirit to the newly baptized, and then they instituted the rite of laying on of hands. And God was pleased to show his approbation of their institution, by giving wonderful effusions of his Spirit to those on whom they had laid their hands; as appears from that famous instance, Acts viii. 14, &c. where, when the Samaritans had been converted and baptized by Philip the deacon, they did not receive the Holy Ghost until Peter and John, two of the apostolic order, had, by laying on their hands, confirmed them.

Q. How is this instance further strengthened?

A. By a similar occurrence to the disciples at Ephesus, upon whom, after they had been baptized in the name of Jesus, the Apostle Paul laid his hands; and then the Holy Ghost came upon them. Acts xix. 5, 6, &c.

Q. Does not St. Paul mention this rite as a religious rite?

A. Yes, he mentions *the laying on of hands*,* as well as *the doctrine of* baptisms, as a divine rite; and orthodox commentators or expositors in all ages, till the reformation, so understood it; even John Calvin himself affirms prereniptorily, that this one text shows confirmation to be of apostolic institution.

Q. Has not confirmation been continued as contributing to sanctification in all ages of the church?

A. Yes, and is still, in our sense of it, allowed by the Lutheran churches, and constantly practised in Bohemia; nor is it contemned by any sober Protestants in any of the reformed churches in the world.

* Heb. vi. 2.

II. *Of the preparative Part of the Office.*

Q. *At what age is confirmation to be administerd?*

A. The time is not restricted to any particular age, but it is to be used when children come to years of discretion, and are well instructed in the catechism. Much depends upon the capacity of the child, and more upon the mode of its education.

Q. *How does this office begin?*

A. With a proper preface, declaring that none are to be admitted to confirmation, until they are so instructed; because it is impossible for any to renew their vow, or take it upon themselves, which is the principal end of confirmation, before they know what it is.

Q. *What follows?*

A. The end of confirmation being thus known to the congregation, the bishop addresses himself to those who intend to be confirmed; asking them whether they are willing to renew their baptismal vow, and to take it upon themselves; solemnly charging them to give a direct and sincere reply, as being in the presence of God, and the whole congregation. To which every one answers audibly, *I do.*

Q. *What does this answer, which the people are directed to give, suppose?*

A. That due care has been taken, both by the sureties and minister, that every one presented on this occasion has been particularly examined, and carefully informed, what a solemn profession he is to make, or renew, in the presence of God.

Q. *What is next?*

A. The persons to be confirmed having professed their readiness to renew their baptismal vow, the whole congregation express their joy, and their desires that it may be confirmed, in some of David's words; which are often used in ancient liturgies, and are very properly inserted here, that all pre-

sent may join in acknowledging that it is by the help of God that they are moved to desire confirmation, Psal. cxxiv. 8; in giving glory to God for raising in them these good desires, Psal. cxiii. 2; and in begging that the prayers, now made for them, may be heard and accepted. Psal. cii. 2.

Q. What follows?

A. After these versicles a prayer, that God would strengthen the baptized with the Holy Ghost the comforter, who had in their baptism received him as a sanctifier; and confer upon them what theologians have styled the seven-fold gifts of the Spirit, which are transcribed into this prayer from the old Greek and Latin translations of Isaiah, xi. 1, and are here put for all the gifts of the Spirit, because the scriptures describe the Holy Ghost by seven spirits; and among the ancients, the number seven is put for the Holy Spirit himself. And these seven-fold gifts, here enumerated, were repeated in the very same words in the office of confirmation as long ago as the time of St. Ambrose. From whence, and the Greek liturgy, this whole prayer is almost verbatim transcribed.

III. *Of the Solemnity of Confirmation.*

Q. By whom is confirmation to be administerd?

A. By bishops only; for though Philip the deacon had liberty to preach and baptize, yet none but the Apostles had power and authority to confirm; and thereupon the primitive church always reserved the honour of dispensing this administration to the bishops their successors, as all the Fathers unanimously testify. And as they have the sole honour, so they have also the whole charge of this duty; and since it must be wholly omitted, if they do not perform it, the church has enjoined the frequent administration of it by those reverend Fathers, whose peculiar privilege of confirming is apt to beget a greater veneration for it in the minds of de-

vout people, and to make them expect greater effects from that office, when none but the highest order in the church can perform it.

Q. What is the ceremony of confirmation?

A. When the bishop confirms any person, he lays his hands upon his head, which is one of the most ancient ceremonies in the world; observed by Jacob in giving his blessing, and ever after practised among the Jews in benedictions, and in conferring holy offices, and to many purposes in their religion. Accordingly our Lord used it when he blessed little children, and healed the sick; and the Apostles, from so universal a practice, continued the rite for communicating the Spirit in confirmation; which was so regularly observed, that St. Paul calls the whole office, "laying on of hands," as observed before; which name it afterwards retained among the Latin Fathers, confirmation being never administered without that ceremony.

Q. Is the Holy Ghost given now, in laying on of hands, as to the first Christians?

A. Yes; the Holy Ghost is as truly given in laying on of hands now, as to the first Christians, though not altogether in the same manner or degree.

Q. Wherein is the difference?

A. The extraordinary or miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, which, at confirmation, were given in the first ages of the church, were necessary for converting unbelievers.* But now these, with other signs and miracles, are restrained in the church, as of less necessary use. Yet the ordinary gifts and graces are still imparted, being of perpetual use for sanctifying and strengthening every member of Christ's church, and equally necessary for all Christians in all ages, who always stand in need of the influence of the Holy Spirit, for the great purpose of sanctification, without which none can be saved.†

* 1 Cor. xiv. 22. † Heb. xii. 14.

Q. Does the bishop immediately confer the Holy Ghost himself?

A. No; for though the bishop be the instrument of conveying the Holy Spirit to us, yet he does not pretend to give it as from himself; but by an humble and earnest supplication begs it of God, whose steward he is: For confirmation was always performed by praying over the party confirmed. And St. Ambrose notes, that even St. Paul himself was not so bold as to communicate the Spirit authoritatively to his new converts, but that he begs it of God for them. Col. i. 9.

Q. In what posture are children, and other persons, to receive confirmation?

A. Kneeling, either at the rails of the altar, or in some wide convenient aisle in the church, which ought to be done with great decency.

IV. *Of the concluding Devotions.*

Q. What follows the benediction?

A. The parties confirmed having professed their faith, and renewed their vow of obedience, ought now to be saluted as brethren; and therefore the bishop first desires that the Lord may be with them, to assist them in blessing his name for these mercies; and they again mutually pray that the Lord may be with the spirit of the holy man who is praying for them; and then they all join in repeating the Lord's prayer audibly.

Q. What is to be observed in particular of the versicle, response, and Lord's prayer in this place?

A. That they are a solemn and proper transition from the prayer of confirmation, which is particular, and frequently interrupted, to the general prayers, in which all join to supplicate those blessings which are annexed to this apostolic usage.

Q. What is next?

A. Because the bishop has laid his hands on them as a token of God's favour, he is therefore con-

cerned to pray that it may not be an empty and insignificant sign, but that the hand of God may be over them for ever, and his holy Spirit be always with them.

Q. What follows?

A. After this is added a collect out of the communion office; because the ancients believed that confirmation was a preservative to both body and soul; so that after we have received it, we may very properly pray that God would direct, sanctify and govern both our souls and bodies in the ways of his laws, and in the works of his commandments.

Q. What is the last thing performed in this office?

A. The blessing which concludes all offices, and which particularly ought to end this, in regard of its being an epitome of the whole administration, which is only a more formal and solemn benediction.

Q. What do we learn from this, and the five next preceding chapters?

A. That the life of grace, as well as that of nature, has its proper stages and periods; and that the one bears a remarkable correspondence to the other. The similitude which exists between the natural and spiritual world will, in the plainest manner show the beauty, as well as the wisdom, of the Christian religion; and nature may be made to illustrate the proceedings of grace.

Q. In what manner?

A. First, man is born into the world, and then receives the life of nature. The Christian has also a birth, by which he is born unto God, and then receives his spiritual life; and this being a second birth, is called regeneration.

Q. What next?

A. Nature takes care to preserve, to feed, to instruct its offspring, and to train it up for the ends of its being: answerable to this, in the church, is the season of catechising, and instruction; grace having the like concern to cherish and promote the

spiritual growth in her children. In this respect, the church is the school, Christ the teacher, and his word the food: this may also be called our spiritual apprenticeship.

Q. What further?

A. When the natural man has been for a certain time under the tuition and discipline of others, and is fitted to the calling to which he is designed, he then takes such calling and profession upon himself, and applies with diligence, if he be wise, to follow, and put in practice, what he has been taught. Parallel to this in the Christian life, is what the church calls confirmation. For then we take upon ourselves our holy calling, in which we had before been instructed: then it is we receive our portion of goods from our heavenly Father; that stock which we are to improve for treasure in heaven; those precious talents which we are to occupy, until our Lord shall come to reckon with us: these are, in the language of our church, the seven-fold gifts of his Holy Spirit. And according to our use or abuse of these, we shall be rewarded or punished at the great day of accounts.

Q. What lastly?

A. As the young Christian is now fitted for the acts and exercise of obedience, and has professedly undertaken, and is entered upon the duties of that station, in our great master's family, to which he is called; and consequently, as he is now more especially obliged to discharge the same with all good fidelity; to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, by giving all diligence, pursuant to the order of our vow, and the advice of St. Peter, to "add to his faith, virtue;" that is, a good life to a sound and orthodox faith; so, on the other hand, the good householder, our Lord and Master, doth not fail to provide for his family the necessary food, as well as comforts and conveniences, for enabling them with strength and cheerfulness to go through their work, and perform his service. This provi-

sion he hath made for them in the Lord's supper, which being the food of the soul, to strengthen and refresh it for the business of our heavenly calling, it answers to the like provision that is made by masters and parents for the maintenance and support of their children and servants, in the life of nature, to fit and prepare them for their business.

N. B. If the reader desires to see this apostolic rite largely explained, and its necessity proved, he would do well to peruse bishop Taylor's Discourse of Confirmation, among his Polemical Tracts; and bishop Hall's Treatise of the Apostolic Institution of the imposition of Hands; and especially Dr. Hobart's alteration of Mr. Nelson's Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church.

CHAPTER XII.

Of the Form of Solemnization of Matrimony.

HEBREWS xiii. 4.

Marriage is honourable in all.

I. *Of Matrimony in general.*

Q. WHAT *is matrimony?*

A. It is a contract, both civil and religious, between a man and a woman, by which they engage to live together, in mutual love and friendship: Or, it is an indissoluble union, contracted by mutual consent, between one man and one woman, in a lawful manner, by which they are obliged to live together until separated by death.

Q. By whom was marriage instituted?

A. By God himself, as is evident from the two first chapters in the Bible. Whence it came to pass, that amongst all the descendants from our first parents, the numerous inhabitants of the different nations in the world, there has been some religious

way of entering into this state, in testimony of its divine institution. Among Christians, especially, from the very first ages of the church, those who have been married have been always joined together in a solemn manner by an ecclesiastical person. It is certain, that in both the Greek and Latin churches, there were offices in the most early times, for the religious celebration of this ordinance; but being afterwards mixed with superstitious rites, the compilers of our liturgy not only laid them aside, but drew up a form more agreeable to the usage of the primitive church.

Q. Why ought marriage to be made a religious rite?

A. Because it is the bond, as well as foundation of good society; and it is the interest of mankind it should be inviolable.

Q. Why ought it to be performed by a lawful minister?

A. Because the minister is God's representative, to take the securities, and bless the parties in his name; for as God himself married the first man and woman, so the covenant is made to him; and for this reason the primitive Christians also did not account it a lawful marriage, unless it was celebrated by a lawful minister.

Q. Who is the lawful minister?

A. The bishop is the lawful minister of the whole diocese; and the presbyter or parish-priest is the lawful minister of all those who are immediately under his charge: and when the parties belong to different congregations, the lawful minister of either congregation marries them, though the common custom is, that it be done by the lawful minister of the place to which the woman belongs. Deacons, in our church, are always permitted to solemnize the bonds of marriage.

Q. But have not magistrates a right to marry?

A. No; it may perhaps be lawful in a civil point of view, but not in a religious sense; I mean, that

by the laws of a state it may be allowed, but not by the laws of God; and besides, it is contrary to the decrees and practice of the Christian church from the earliest ages.

Q. But are they not the ministers of God?

A. By virtue of their civil commission they are the ministers of God to men for good; the avengers to execute wrath on such as do evil, and rewarders of such as do well; but not the ministers of God to officiate in the performance of religious rites and ceremonies. And, therefore, we may observe, that, for this reason, very few decent people will go to a magistrate when a clergyman can be had to solemnize their marriage.

Q. When were justices of the peace first empowered to perform this rite?

A. In the time of Oliver Cromwell, above 1600 years after our Saviour was upon earth.

Q. Why is a particular office requisite to the celebration of matrimony?

A. Because it has been so universally reputed an act of religion, that it is very fit it should have a peculiar office for the performance of it. In the western church there is still extant, in the sacramentary of St. Gregory, an ancient form of marriage, composed above 1000 years ago. The Greek church has three several offices, one at the espousals, another at the marriage, which they call the coronation, and a third for those who are married a second time. But no church can show a more suitable form than this of ours, which is composed with equal judgment and piety, and instructs those who are to be joined by it, in the several parts of their duty.

II. *Of the Rubrics concerning the Banns.*

Q. What is meant by the banns?

A. The public notice which is given in the church to the congregation, concerning the intention of

those who mean shortly to enter the holy state of matrimony.

Q. What direction does the rubric give?

A. That "the laws respecting matrimony, whether by publishing the banns in churches, or by licence, being different in the several States, every minister is left to the direction of those laws, in every thing that regards the civil contract between the parties."

Q. When the banns are published, how often are they to be repeated?

A. The church orders that they should be published three several times before the marriage shall be celebrated; a custom as ancient as the days of Tertullian, and used in most Protestant churches in the world.

Q. Why are the banns of matrimony to be published immediately after the morning service, and before sermons?

A. To give the greater publicity to them; for at that time it is to be presumed the whole congregation is assembled.

III. *Of the Rubric before the Preface.*

Q. At what time of day are marriages to be solemnized?

A. Our church has appointed no particular time, but left it altogether to the parties concerned; owing, probably, to a particular custom of this country, where night marriages generally prevail.

Q. How is it in the church of England?

A. In that church all marriages are ordered to be celebrated in the day time.

Q. Where are marriages to be solemnized?

A. At the day appointed for solemnization of matrimony, the persons to be married are to come into the body of the church, or to be ready in some proper house.

Q. Who are required to be present at the time of marriage?

A. It is enjoined that it be done in the presence of the friends and neighbours of the parties married, who are competent witnesses, and who are to attend on this solemnity, to unite with the minister for a blessing on it. Though it is probable that by the word friends here used, are to be understood some select friends or acquaintances, called by the ancients paranymphs or bridemen. Some traces of which custom we find as old as Samson's time, whose wife was delivered to his companion, (Judges xiv. 20) who, in the Septuagint version, is called *brideman.* And that bridemen were in use among the Jews in our Saviour's time, is evident from John iii. 29. From the Jews the custom was received by Christians, who used it at first rather as a civil form, and something that added to the solemnity of the occasion, than as a religious rite; though it was afterwards countenanced so far as to be made a part of the sacred solemnity.

Q. What is the position of the two parties?

A. The bridegroom and bride being thus attended to the church, or some other place appointed, are there to stand, the man on the right hand and the woman on the left; which is expressly so ordered in the Latin and Greek churches. But among the Jews the woman stands on the right hand of her intended husband, in allusion to that place of the Psalms, *At thy right hand did stand the queen in a vesture of gold.* Psalm xlv. 10. Yet since the right hand is the most honourable place, it is in all Christian churches assigned the man, as being the head of the woman.

IV. *Of the Preface, or general Exhortation.*

Q. How does this office begin?

A. To prevent the vain and loose mirth too frequent at these solemnities, the church begins this

office with a grave and awful preface; which represents the sacred action to which we are preparing ourselves, to be of so divine an original, of so high a nature, and of so great importance to all mankind, that they are not only vain and imprudent, but even impious and void of shame, who will not lay aside their levity, and be composed upon so just and solemn an occasion. And to prevent any misfortune which either of the parties might inconsiderately or rashly run into by this marriage, the priest charges all who are present, if they know any just cause why the parties may not be lawfully joined together, they do now declare it, before this holy bond be formed, since they cannot afterwards be heard to the benefit of either party.

Q. And are those who know any lawful impediment obliged to discover it?

A. Yes; both because the church expressly commands and calls upon them in a public and solemn manner to do so; and also because, if they do not, they become answerable to God for all the fatal consequences of their silence.

V. *Of the Charge to the Parties.*

Q. What follows next to the preface, or general exhortation?

A. The charge to the two persons now to be joined. Learned writers on this subject deem it a necessary circumstance in a Christian marriage, that both parties protest in the presence of God, and of his minister, that they are free from all other obligations, and that their marriage is liable to no just exception: and though others are first called upon to discover the impediments, if any such be known, as being most likely to reveal them; yet here we charge the parties themselves also, as being most concerned, to declare them; since, if there shall appear any just impediment to their marriage afterwards, they must either necessarily live together in perpetual sin, or be separated for ever by divorce.

VI. *Of the Impediments to Marriage.*

Q. What are the impediments to marriage?

A. Independent of impotency, and of mental imbecility, which latter invalidates this contract, as it does every other engagement, they are three: 1. A preceding marriage, or precontract still existing. 2. Consanguinity, or affinity. And, 3. In cases of minority, want of the consent of parents or guardians.

Q. Why is a preceding marriage a sufficient impediment?

A. Because God made but one woman for Adam. Under the gospel-dispensation, polygamy is absolutely forbidden. Our Saviour has expressly declared, that whosoever shall put away his wife, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. If, then, it be adultery for a man to marry a second woman, after he has put away the first, it would be no less adultery to marry a second whilst he retains the first. Again, when St. Paul enjoins every man, for the avoiding of fornication, *to have his own wife*, or (as the words ought to be translated) *a wife of his own;* he enjoins that every woman likewise *have her own husband*, or (as the words ought also to be rendered) *a husband peculiar to herself.* So that polygamy is no more allowed to the husband than to the wife. And, therefore, if either of the parties who offer themselves to be married have a husband or wife living, this latter marriage is null and void, and they live in as manifest adultery as they would have done, though they had not been joined by the minister.

Q. Why is consanguinity a sufficient impediment?

A. Because nature herself has an abhorrence to marriage connexions between those who are nearly related in blood, which nothing but absolute necessity would have excused, as was the case at the first propagation of mankind; but afterwards, Almighty

God made several laws forbidding such near connexions among his chosen people; even the heathen themselves had an aversion to them, from the very feelings of nature. The church, therefore, enforces this dictate of God and nature, by discountenancing marriages within certain degrees of consanguinity.

Q. How many degrees of consanguinity are forbidden by the law of God?

A. Three; and, therefore, no power or authority, either in church or state, can dispense with this prohibition.

Q. Are first or second cousins forbidden to marry?

A. No; neither by the law of God, nor the church, for none that we call cousins are within the third degree of kindred; even first cousins are four removes distant from each other, and therefore in reason may be permitted to marry together.

Q. What are meant by incestuous marriages?

A. Such as come within the degrees of consanguinity prohibited by the laws of God in scripture. See Levit. xviii.

Q. Why is the want of the consent of parents or guardians a lawful impediment?

A. For several weighty reasons. First, because of the respect and obedience which children owe to their parents by the law of nature, and the honour which is due to them by the express law of God; all which require that, in a concern of so great consequence to the future happiness both of the children and parents, nothing should be concluded without their concurrence.* Secondly, because experience shows, that marriages made against the will of the parents, for the most part, prove unfor-

* In the important affair of matrimony the primitive Christians would never fail to consult their bishop; and when all was fixed, the marriage was publicly and solemnly celebrated by the blessing of the pastor, and confirmed by oblation of the holy communion.

tunate: the disturbance of families, dissentions between husband and wife, the bad education of the children, are commonly the fatal consequences of such marriages; and this is not to be wondered at. The insult done to the paternal authority, and the motives whence such marriages proceed, which generally deserve reprehension, banish the Spirit of God from them, and deprive them of his blessing. Thirdly, because among the people of God under the old law, the parents had the principal authority in marrying their children; and hence, when Almighty God speaks to them on this subject, he addresses himself only to the parents. Thus, when he forbids them to marry with the heathen nations, he says, "Thou shalt not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter to thy son." Deut. viii. 3. And the wise man speaks thus: "Marry thy daughter well, and thou shalt do a great work, and give her to a wise man." Eccles. vii. 27. On this account we find that the servants of God exactly followed this rule of marrying with the advice and consent of their parents, as we read of Isaac, Jacob, and Samson; and Esau was blamed, and displeased his parents, by acting contrary. And, lastly, because the church of Christ has ever condemned such marriages as are performed without the consent of parents.

Q. In what cases can parents, in conscience, refuse their consent to the marriage of their children?

A. When the proposed marriage would justly disturb the peace of their family, or be a disgrace to them; when they judge it would prove highly detrimental to their children, who, blinded by passion, do not perceive the fatal consequences of the connexion; when it is such as would endanger the loss of their religion, or expose their children, if they should have any, to the same danger; and when it is contrary to the custom of their country, and the Christian church.

Q. But if the parents, merely through hardheart-

edness, or avarice, or humour, should refuse their consent to a reasonable marriage of their children, would they be obliged to abstain from it?

A. Parents who should behave in this manner would commit a sin themselves, in hurting their children without a reasonable cause; and when the case is evident, and appears so to proper judges, children are not then obliged to obey them, provided they are of lawful age.

VII. *Of the Espousals.*

Q. Why is it requisite that the mutual consent of the parties be asked?

A. Because the solemnization of matrimony being a formal compact, it is so essentially necessary, that the marriage is not valid without it. And, therefore, we find that Rebecca's friends asked her consent before they sent her away to Isaac. And in the firmest kind of marriage amongst the Romans, which they called *coemption*, the parties themselves mutually asked this of each other. This, therefore, being so important a custom, is taken into the Christian offices; only among Christians the question is proposed by the priest, that so the declaration may be the more solemn, as being made in the immediate presence of God, and to his deputed minister. The man, therefore, is asked, by his Christian name, without the addition of the surname, "Whether he will have this woman to his wedded wife?" and the woman also is asked by her Christian name, without the addition of the surname, "Whether she will have this man to her wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of matrimony?" And that they may the better know what are the conditions of this state, the minister enumerates the duties which each of them, by this covenant, will be obliged to perform.

Q. What is the duty of the husband?

Q. What is the foundation of it?

A. It seems to be a peculiar care of the female sex, who are always supposed to be under the tuition of a father or guardian, whose consent is necessary to make their acts valid.

Q. What does this rite imply?

A. That the woman does not seek a husband, but is given to one by her parents or friends, whose commands in this affair she seems rather to follow than her own inclinations. For which cause, among the nuptial rites of the old Romans, the bride was to be taken by the bridegroom with a sort of violence from the arms of her mother; and when she came to her husband's house she was not to go in willingly, but was to be carried in by force; which, like this ceremony of ours, very well suited to the modesty and shamefacedness of her sex.

IX. *Of the mutual Stipulation.*

Q. Why is the woman to be given, by her father or friend, not to the man, but to the minister?

A. To signify that the father resigns her up to God, and that it is God, who, by his minister, now gives her in marriage, and who provides a wife for the man, as he did at first for Adam.

Q. How is the minister to dispose of the woman?

A. He is to deliver her into the possession of the man, as he afterwards does the man into the possession of the woman, by causing each of them to take the other by the right hand.

Q. What does the joining of hands naturally signify?

A. The contracting a friendship, and making a covenant: and the right hand especially was esteemed so sacred, that Cicero calls it *the witness of our faith:* and, therefore, the joining of these being used in all covenants, it is not strange it should be observed in the solemn covenant of marriage.

Q. By whom has this ceremony been used?

the Romans the wife was obliged, by law, to be subject to her husband, and to call him lord: But then they had a peculiar magistrate to take care that men did not abuse this power, but rule over their wives with gentleness and affection. Wherefore women may and ought to pay all that obedience which the gospel requires of them: Nor have they any reason, especially with us, to complain with *Medea*, that they are sold for slaves with their own money, because there is really no slavery in obedience which springs from love, and is paid in respect to the nobler sex, and in requital for that protection which the weaker sex both needs and enjoys in the state of matrimony. So that it is not only an impious contempt of divine authority, but egregious pride and folly for any woman to refuse either to promise or render this obedience; which is her chief advantage, if she has wisdom to understand, or skill to manage it properly.

Q. Why are each of the parties obliged to answer, "I will?"

A. Because these are the proper words which bind compacts, but which can never lay a more solemn obligation than when they are pronounced upon this occasion. For if we retract after pronouncing them here, we shall have as many witnesses of the falsehood, as there were persons present at the solemnity. And therefore they ought to be spoken with deliberate gravity, and regarded with the greatest sincerity.

VIII. *Of giving the Woman away.*

Q. What is the antiquity of this rite?

A. It is very ancient; as is evident from the phrase so often used in scripture, of giving a daughter to wife.

Q. By whom has this custom been practised?

A. Both by Heathens and Christians, as well as Jews, in all ages.

were practised upon very trifling occasions among Jews and Romans: insomuch that one of the rabbies has impiously affirmed it to be "sufficient for divorce, if another woman is better liked by the man." But this being so contrary to the nature of marriage, it is necessary it should be removed from all Christian societies; which cannot be more effectually done than by a particular recital, at the time of marriage, of all the cases which may be pretended as the causes of a future dislike. The next particular is the rule by which the compact is made, viz. "according to God's holy ordinance;" which may either be referred to every part of the present stipulation, so as to imply that all the branches thereof are agreeable to the divine institution; or they may be peculiarly applied to the two last classes, that each of the parties "will love and cherish, &c. the other, till death shall part" them, which is certainly "according to God's ordinance." Lastly, here is the ratification of all the former particulars in the ancient form, "and thereto I plight," as the man says, or, as the woman, "I give thee my troth;" that is, for the performance of all that has been said, each pledges his or her faith or truth; as much as if they respectively had said, if I perform not the covenant I have made, let me forfeit my credit, and never more be counted just, or honest, or faithful.

X. *Of the Ring in Marriage.*

Q. What is the meaning and design of the ring?

A. To be a visible pledge of our endless fidelity, which anciently was to be accompanied with other tokens of espousals, as gold or silver; which intimates it to be the remains of an ancient custom, whereby it was usual for the man to purchase the woman, paying for the price of her a certain sum of money, or else performing certain articles or conditions, which the father of the damsel would accept

as an equivalent. Among the Romans it was called *exemption* or purchasing; and from them the custom obtained among the western Christians, and is still retained in the ring, which is given as a pledge of the dowry that the woman is to be entitled to by the marriage.

Q. Why is a ring, rather than any thing else, made use of?

A. Because anciently the ring was a seal, by which all orders were signed, and things of value secured; and, therefore, the delivery of it was a sign that the person to whom it was given was admitted into the highest friendship and trust. For which reason it was adopted as a ceremony in marriage, to denote that the wife, in consideration of her being espoused to the man, was admitted as a sharer in her husband's esteem, and a joint partner in his honour and estate: and, therefore, we find that not only the ring, but the keys also were, in former times, delivered to her at the marriage. That the ring was in use amongst the old Romans, we have several undoubted testimonies. And that the use of it was not owing to any superstition among them, we have the authority of Tertullian, a very ancient Father of the Christian church. Pliny indeed tells us, that, in his time, the Romans used an iron ring, without any jewel; but Tertullian hints, that in the former ages it was a ring of gold.

Q. Why was the ring of gold?

A. Because gold being the noblest and purest metal, and continuing longest uncorrupted, it was thought most suitable to intimate the generous, sincere, and durable affection that ought to subsist between the married parties.

Q. Why round rather than of any other form?

A. Because this form, which was the most perfect of all figures, and was used by the ancients as the hieroglyphic of eternity, was understood to im-

ply, that the conjugal love should never have an end.

Q. But do not these seem to be allegorical significations?

A. Yes; for the true use of the ring, as we have seen, was instituted at first to imply something more; namely, that the woman, in consideration of a certain dowry stipulated by the man, of which the ring is delivered as an earnest and pledge, espouses and makes over herself to him as his wife.

Q. How ancient and universal is this rite?

A. It has been used with this signification by Christians in all ages, and all parts of the church: and to the same intent, it is prescribed by our church, as is evident from the words which are spoken at the delivery of it, and from the prayer which follows immediately after, where "the giving and receiving the ring, is called a token and pledge of the vow and covenant betwixt them made." The same is practised by the modern Jews, who, it is not likely, would have adopted the custom in imitation of Christians, and who, therefore, probably received it from their forefathers. Good reason then have we to retain a rite so ancient and universal, and which even Bucer himself, a rigid disciple of Calvin, who was as scrupulous as any man need to be, thought fit to approve as decent and proper.

Q. What direction does the rubric give concerning the ring?

A. That "the man shall give unto the woman a ring; and the minister, taking the ring, shall deliver it unto the man, to put it upon the fourth finger of the woman's left hand."

Q. What does the minister's taking the ring, and delivering it to the man, intimate?

A. That it is our duty to offer all we have to God as the true proprietor, before we use them ourselves; and to receive them as from his hand, to be employed for his glory.

Q. Why is the ring to be put upon the fourth finger of the woman's left hand?

A. Because it is the least active finger of the hand least used; upon which, therefore, the ring may be always in view, and yet least subject to accidents, or to be worn out: which may also teach us, that the two parties should carefully cherish each other's love, that it may endure and last for ever.

Q. What does the man, holding the ring upon this finger, and speaking to the woman, as taught by the minister, assure her of?

A. That this is a visible pledge that he now takes her to his wedded wife: *with this ring* I thee wed, or make covenant, (for so the word signifies) that all the rights and privileges of a lawful wife do from this instant belong to her.

Q. What is the design of these words, "*and with all my worldly goods I thee endow?*"

A. Not so much to invest the woman with a right to all her husband's goods, as to declare that by marriage she has acquired such right; for from the very instant of their making the stipulation, the woman has a right to demand her maintenance during the life of her husband, should he refuse it; and, after his decease, is entitled to such a share of his estate as the law of the land where she lives has provided: only it is to be noted, that during the husband's life the wife has no power to alienate or dispose of any thing without her husband's consent, but to enjoy and use it as there is occasion.

Q. Why does the man further add, "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost?*

A. Because these words are a solemn confirmation of the engagement here made, being an invocation of the sacred Trinity as witness to this compact, who will therefore undoubtedly revenge the perjury on those who break it.

XI. *Of the Lord's Prayer.*

Q. Why is the Lord's prayer used here?

A. To sanctify and prepare the way for the remaining part of the office, that all may be done to the glory of God.

Q. How is this divine prayer introduced?

A. With this solemn address to the company, *Let us pray;* in order to turn their attention from the bride and bridegroom to God, than which nothing can be more proper in this place.

XII. *Of the Prayer for a Blessing.*

Q. Why is this prayer added next?

A. Because, the covenant being now finished, it is very requisite we should desire a blessing on it:* for even the Heathens looked upon their marriage-covenant as inauspicious if it were not accompanied with a sacrifice; and, therefore, Christians surely can do no less than call upon the divine Majesty on the like occasion. For this reason the minister begs for them the blessing of God, that they may always perform and keep the covenant which they have now been making.

XIII. *Of the Ratification.*

Q. What follows the prayer for a blessing?

A. The ratification of the marriage; for as it was an ancient custom among the Romans, and other Heathens, for masters to ratify the marriages of their servants; so, since we profess to be the servants of God, it is necessary that he should confirm our contract. To which end the minister, who is

* Conradus Pellicanus, a learned commentator, very justly observes, that "prayers and benedictions are never to be omitted in marriage."

his representative, joining the right hands of the married persons together, declares, in the words of our blessed Lord, that they are joined by God, and that therefore no human power can separate them: "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

XIV. *Of the Publication.*

Q. Why is the publication placed next?

A. Because the holy covenant being now firmly made, it ought to be duly proclaimed to the company; and, therefore, the minister, addressing himself to those who are present, and recapitulating all that has been done between the parties, makes proclamation that the marriage is legal and valid, and "pronounces that they be man and wife together, in the name of the Father," &c.

Q. What is the design of setting God's name to this sacred contract?

A. To make it hallowed, reverend, and irreversible.

XV. *Of the Blessing.*

Q. How is this office concluded?

A. With a blessing; for the covenant being made by the authority of God, the institution being his, the method his, and he being the author, witness, and ratifier of this contract;* nothing could be added more properly at the conclusion, than a solemn benediction from that holy and undivided Trinity, who is so many ways engaged to bless it.

Q. How ought we to consider this ministerial benediction?

A. As of great efficacy with God, and very beneficial to us, if we duly prepare ourselves to receive it.

* Epiphanius was of opinion that our great Redeemer was invited to the marriage in Cana in Galilee, that as a prophet he might pronounce the nuptial benediction.

CHAPTER XIII.

Of the Order for the Visitation of the Sick.

JAMES v. 14, 15.

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him:——And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

I. *Of visiting the Sick in general.*

Q. HOW *does it appear that visiting the sick is a duty incumbent upon all mankind?*

A. Because, as no age nor sex, no state nor condition can secure us from this calamity, therefore no man should forget that it will, one day or other, prove to be his own lot; but all men should endeavour to comfort those who at present are in this affliction.

Q. *Are there any particular promises annexed to this duty?*

A. Yes, many great and precious promises; and our Saviour especially mentions it as one of the conditions of our entrance into the kingdom of glory, and the neglect of it as what will consign us to endless woe. Matt. xxiv.

Q. *How was it esteemed by the primitive Fathers of the church?*

A. As one of the most solemn and charitable exercises of religion.

Q. *Why are the clergy more peculiarly obliged to this duty?*

A. Because it is a divine command; for though private friends may pray for us, and with us, yet we can by no means place such confidence in their prayers as we may in those which are offered up to heaven in our behalf by such as are peculiarly

commissioned to pray for us. For this reason it is enjoined by St. James, that "if any be sick, they shall call for the elders of the church." Whence we may observe, that the duty of sending for the minister devolves on the sick.

Q. Why are the sick to send for the minister?

A. Because the minister, it is very probable, may not hear of his sickness; or he may not be so good a judge when his visit will be seasonable, or when the party shall be best able to join with him.

Q. When is the sick to send for the minister?

A. When the disease first discovers itself, and not when the person is just expiring, as is too often the case.

Q. Why may not the sick postpone it to the last hour of life?

A. Because, if it is thus deferred, the minister may do the sick no good. To pray for recovery when the distemper has become mortal, is only to mock the Almighty. Nor can any spiritual advantage be reasonably expected from the minister's assistance to one who is unable to do any thing for himself.

Q. What charge did the ancient constitutions lay upon the bodily physician?

A. That when they were called to the sick, they did, before all things, persuade them to send for the physician of souls, that when care should be taken of the sick man's spirit, they might more successfully apply bodily remedies.

II. *Of the Salutation.*

Q. Why is the minister, on entering the sick man's house, directed to say, "Peace be to this house, and to all that dwell in it?

A. Because it is the salutation that our Saviour commanded his Apostles to use to every house into which they should enter; and, what is particularly to our purpose, one end of the Apostles' mission was to heal the sick.

Q. But did not the Apostles work miraculous cures?

A. Yes; but when miraculous gifts ceased, the salutation remained; which, therefore, we use to this very day in visiting the sick, since we still go on the same charitable view, though not endued with the same power.

Q. Is the sense of these words suitable to this occasion?

A. Yes; for peace signifies all outward blessings, though when used in salutations, it generally imports health. For which reason, in Joseph's inquiry after the health of his father, though the Hebrew text expresses it, "Is there peace to your father?" our public translation renders it, "Is your father well?" to which the Septuagint reading also exactly corresponds, viz. "Is your father in health?" When, therefore, a family is visited with sickness or distress, what better salutation can we use than that which expresses peace, or health and prosperity? And as the apostolical salutation was not a mere compliment, but a real benediction to those who were worthy; so shall this of ours prevail for what we ask to that house which is duly prepared to receive it.

Q. How should the family receive this salutation?

A. With thankfulness and faith, and joyfully welcome the ambassador of heaven, who, in the time of their calamity, comes with a view to bring health and peace to their dwelling.

III. *Of the Supplications and Prayers.*

Q. Why is the sentence out of the litany used here?

A. The litany being designed for the averting of evil, the proper office for a state of affliction would have been very suitable to be used here entire, could the sick man attend to it. But this not being probable, one sentence only is taken from it, to deprecate our iniquities. And because all of us

deserve to be afflicted, as well as the person for whom we pray; therefore all who are present join in saying, both for themselves and the sick, "Spare us, good Lord."

Q. What follows?

A. As those who came to Jesus for help used to cry, "Lord, have mercy upon us;" so do we here, in our distress, supplicate and beseech the Almighty for mercy, in that ancient form of the Christian church, which is very suitable to prepare us with an humble boldness, to look up to heaven, and call God our Father, and to beg further blessings of him.

Q. What is the original of this form?

A. It is taken from the Psalms, where it is sometimes repeated twice together; to which the Christian church has added a third petition, namely, "Christ have mercy upon us," that so it might be a short litany or supplication to every person in the Trinity. As we have offended each person, we pray to each, and therefore beg help from them all.

Q. What is the antiquity of it?

A. It is of great antiquity both in the eastern and western churches; and an old council ordered it to be used three times a day in the public services.

Q. What is next?

A. When we have thus prayed against evil in general, we proceed to petition for those good things which the sick man's condition requires in particular. And that our prayers may be the more efficacious, they are introduced with the prayer of our Lord, which is peculiarly proper here, as being very suitable to a state of trouble: for herein the afflicted man may show his love of God, by desiring his name may be hallowed; his desire of heaven, by wishing God's kingdom may come; and his submission to the divine pleasure, by praying God's will may be done. Herein the sick may also beg earthly comforts, in asking for his daily bread; he may crave pardon for what is past, in beseeching

God to forgive his trespasses; and express his charity, by declaring he forgives those who trespass against him. Herein he may likewise testify his resolution to amend, by requesting he may not be led into temptation; and procure freedom from the punishment of sin, by praying to be delivered from evil.

Q. What immediately follow the Lord's prayer?

A. Some short responses, in which all who are present are to join with the priest in behalf of the sick person, who will doubtless be refreshed by the charity and devotion of so many supplicants, with united requests, petitioning the throne of grace for him.*

Q. What is next?

A. Two short prayers; in the first of which, the minister proceeds to sum up the requests of the people, and to beg, that whilst the sickness remains, it may be made easy to bear, by the comforts of divine grace continually bestowed on the person who suffers. And in the second prayer he points out what spiritual uses may be made of bodily pain and infirmity, and desires that the correction may be sanctified in such a manner, that whether it shall end in life or death, it may turn to his advantage.

IV. *Of the Exhortation.*

Q. Why is this exhortation added here?

A. Because it is a part of the minister's duty to exhort, as well as to pray for the people, and that not only in time of health, but also in sickness; for then they stand most in need of directions, and are then most likely to regard good advice.

Q. What is the form of this exhortation?

* The words, *he*, *him*, and *his*, are printed in the prayers in another character, that the minister may adapt them to either sex, or to more persons than one, as the occasion shall require.

A. It exactly agrees with the heads of exhortation, which the priest was ordered to use to the sick by a very ancient council. It consists, first, of grave and suitable instructions concerning the author of afflictions, the ends for which they are sent, the manner how they are to be borne, and the benefit of improving them. And here, if the person visited be very sick, the minister may end his exhortation.

Q. But if his distemper will allow it, how is the minister to proceed?

A. By admonishing and exciting him to the practice of those virtues which are now more especially needful; such as, in the first place, patience; since till his mind is rendered calm, it is in vain to press him to faith or repentance; and, therefore, this second part of the exhortation endeavours to compose the spirits of the sick person, by proper arguments and examples.*

Q. What is the next thing to be done?

A. Being now in hopes that the sick man's mind is serene, the minister is next to give him such advice as is proper for one that is preparing for death. And since at his baptism he made a solemn vow to God, which he promised to keep all the days of his life, it is fit he should examine, now the end of his life may probably draw near, how he has performed and discharged that promise. And because one part of his vow was "to believe all the articles of the Christian faith," therefore, he particularly inquires into the sick man's belief: for, to deny any of these articles is most dangerous and fatal; it is to forsake the faith into which he was baptized, and to cut himself off from all the privileges and benefits to which his baptism entitles him. For which reason it is necessary that our brother should

* The church allows "the exhortation before rehearsed to be said before the minister begins his prayer, as he shall see cause."

show that he has kept this faith entire, that so we may be satisfied that he dies a sound member of the apostolic church.

V. *Of the Examination and Exhortation according to the Direction in the Rubric.*

Q. Why is a discretional examination of the sick person committed to the minister?

A. Because the cases and tempers of men, in sickness, are very different; and, therefore, the church thought it necessary to leave it to the discretion of the minister who visits, to assist and direct them in other matters beside those contained in the former exhortation, as he sees the particular case requires: for the preceding exhortation is applicable to all sick persons in general, and is, for that reason, prescribed in a set form; but in this the church only directs the heads of examination, and leaves the management and expression to the prudence of the minister; since no form could possibly be contrived that would suit all the variety of circumstances that shall happen.

Q. What is the first head of examination, according to the rubric?

A. That the "minister shall examine whether he repent him truly of his sins." For it is certain that all have sinned, and consequently, that all have need of repentance; and, therefore, the minister can give the sick man no comfort upon any good grounds, till he is satisfied of the truth of his repentance.

Q. What is the second head of examination?

A. Whether he "be in charity with all the world; exhorting him, first, to forgive, from his heart, all persons who have offended him; secondly, if he has offended any, to ask forgiveness; and, thirdly, where he has done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the utmost of his power."

Q. Why should the sick man be exhorted to forgive all persons who have offended him?

A. Because there is not any duty more frequently or more strongly enforced in the gospel, than that of brotherly reconciliation, or forgiving of injuries; which even in the prayer that our Lord has taught us, is made the condition of God's forgiving us. The example, therefore, of our Lord, and of his first martyr St. Stephen, who prayed for their murderers at the very instant of their death, should always be considered on these occasions: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" and, "Lord lay not this sin to their charge;" which, as they were their dying words, should also be ours: for certainly it is high time for men to forget their resentments against their neighbours, when they are just going to answer for their own misdoings; especially when we are taught so plainly by our Saviour, that unless we have compassion on our fellow-servant, our Lord will exact from us all that we owe to him, and will deliver us over to the tormentors till we shall have paid what is due from us.

Q. Why, if the sick have offended any, ought he to ask forgiveness?

A. Because he who refuses to do this, is not a true penitent for the injury he hath done his neighbour; and, therefore, he can expect nothing but condemnation from that just Judge, who knows the temper of his mind, and will forgive none who only cease to do evil because they cannot help it.

Q. And why, where he has done injury or wrong to any man, ought he to make amends to the utmost of his power?

A. Because there can be no forgiveness in case of injuries to man, without restitution. Our Lord did not receive Zaccheus into the number of his followers, till he had made profession of his willingness to make due restitution; and, therefore, none can expect to be received into his kingdom, who refuse so necessary a part of justice. And since the sick person may now, for what he knows, be going

to appear before the Judge of all the world, from whom he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, without respect of persons; how much more does it concern him to "agree with his adversary while he is yet in the way with him, lest afterwards the adversary deliver him to the judge, and the judge deliver him to the officer, and so he be cast into prison, whence he shall by no means come out till he has paid the uttermost farthing." So necessary is it, even for those who but suspect themselves of any wrongful deed, to judge and examine themselves with all possible strictness, and by public acknowledgment and tender of satisfaction, to declare their unfeigned and hearty repentance.

Q. If the sick person has not disposed of his goods, what is he then to be admonished of?

A. "To make his will, and to declare his debt, what he oweth, and what is owing to him, for the better discharging of his conscience, and the quietness of his executors." Although the making of a will be a secular matter, and does not relate to spiritual concerns; yet since the affairs of intestates are generally left in so confused a manner, that strifes, contention and law-suits are often the result, it is very prudently enjoined by our church, that the minister should remind the sick person to settle his worldly affairs.

Q. But why does the rubric further add, that "men should often be put in remembrance to take order for the settling of their temporal estates, whilst they are in health?"

A. Because no man is sure but that he may die suddenly, without having time to perform this duty; or though he may be seized with a lingering disease, it may be such as may incapacitate him to discharge it; or, supposing the best, that he may have timely notice or warning of his death, and his understanding should remain perfect to his last moment, yet it must be a disturbance to a dying man,

to have his last hours taken up in ordering and disposing of his worldly affairs, which ought more particularly to be employed in preparing him for eternity. However, if our carelessness has deferred this concern to a sick-bed, it must by no means be omitted now: for we must not leave our friends and relations involved in endless suits and contentions; none of our family must be left unprovided for through our neglect of assigning their portion; nor must our creditors be defrauded of their just demands, for want of declaring our debts.

Q. But if the minister shall think this business to be of too secular a nature to be mingled with his discourses about the spiritual concerns of the sick, what is then directed?

A. He is allowed to manage and dispatch it before he begins the holy office; for that is the intent of the following rubric, which allows, that "the exhortation before rehearsed, may be said before the minister begin his prayer, as he shall see cause."

Q. Why is he earnestly to move the sick person, if he is of ability, to be liberal to the poor?

A. Because, of all our riches, those only which are disposed of to useful and charitable purposes are laid up in store for ourselves. Our good works are the only treasures which shall follow us beyond the grave, and there is no time more proper for acts of charity than the season of sickness, when we are preparing to depart hence. By an old canon law, every one was obliged to leave such a proportion of his estate to charitable uses, as he bequeathed to each of his children. This property, which belonged to the church, was reserved by the bishop for the maintenance of the clergy, the repair of the fabric, and other pious uses. But we are only enjoined to put the rich in mind of the poor, that out of the abundance they are going to leave, they should bestow some suitable donation on them.

VI. *Of the Prayer after the Exhortation.*

Q. Why is this prayer prescribed in this place?

A. Because two Apostles have recommended prayer as the proper means to procure the pardon of a penitent, James v. 15. 1 Epistle John v. 16. Because, also, the ancients teach that the priest obtains remission by his prayers. And the Greek office, as well as ours, has no other form of absolution, but only by way of supplication, which seems to be the most proper, as well as the most unexceptionable method of proceeding. There was anciently such a prayer as this used in the western church on this occasion, and another to the same effect in the eastern church.

VII. *Of the Psalm.*

Q. Why is the minister directed to use this psalm?

A. Because it is so very suitable and proper to express the sick man's state and desires; and, at the same time, to exercise his faith, to inflame his love, to preserve his patience, and to revive his hope.

Q. What does Possidonius relate of St. Augustin?

A. That, on his death-bed, he caused the seven penitential psalms to be written, and placed on the wall before his eyes, that he might read and meditate continually upon them. And, indeed, the book of Psalms is a copious treasury of divine comforts for persons in all kinds of distress; nor is there any part of scripture more proper to be read by those who are in a state of sickness.

VIII. *Of the Blessings.*

Q. How does the minister conclude this office?

A. With three solemn blessings; the first of which is an address to God the Son, the second to the

Father, and the third to the holy and undivided Trinity.

Q. Why are these blessings added?

A. Because, as it is very proper and decent at all times, so it is especially necessary, when we depart from a friend, whose case is such as that perhaps we may see his face no more, to take a tender and affectionate leave of him with a valedictory blessing.

IX. *Of the occasional Prayers.*

Q. Why are these occasional prayers necessary?

A. Because there is so much variety in the state of sickness, that it is impossible any one form should be so composed as to suit every particular occasion. As to those whose distemper is chiefly seated in the body, who are of an age capable of comfort and good advice, who have their senses entire, and time enough to exercise all the forementioned duties of religion; to such, the former office is very suitable and proper. But there are singular cases which require peculiar prayers, and more, indeed, than it is easy to provide for in any stated forms. However, there are six conditions which our church has taken notice of, and for which she has provided six suitable prayers; and she has also added another prayer that may be said by the minister, in behalf of all present, at the visitation of the sick. In the prayer for a sick child, there are such common petitions as are proper to a state of innocence, and the expectations of parents from their offspring. In that for a person dangerously ill, there is a proportionable resignation expressed to the divine will, and a recommendatory supplication for pardon in their behalf, as they had contracted unavoidable sins in the course of their lives. The commendatory prayer for a sick person is an awful and solemn declaration of our hope in the mercies of God, through Christ, upon any one's departure, with suitable reflections on the brevity of life, and the use to be

made on frequent spectacles of mortality, while we are in health and strength. As to the prayer for persons troubled in mind, or in conscience, some people who are accustomed to a round of mirth and jollity may think it unnecessary; but whoever has experienced the horrors of melancholy, or the stings of a guilty conscience, will be of another opinion.

CHAPTER XIV.

Of the Communion of the Sick.

LUKE xxii. 19.

This do in remembrance of me.

I. *Of the general Rubric.*

Q. REHEARSE *the general rubric.*

A. "Forasmuch as all men are subject to many diseases, and sicknesses, and ever uncertain what time they shall depart out of this life; therefore, to the intent they may be always in readiness to die, whensoever it shall please Almighty God to call them, the minister shall diligently, from time to time (but especially in the time of pestilence, or other infectious sickness) exhort his parishioners to the often receiving of the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, when it shall be publicly administered in the church; that so doing, they may, in case of sudden visitation, have the less cause to be disquieted for lack of the same. But if the sick person be not able to come to the church, and yet is desirous to receive the communion in his house, then he must give timely notice to the minister, signifying also how many there are to communicate with him (which shall be two at the

least); and all things necessary being prepared, the minister shall there celebrate the holy communion, beginning with the collect, epistle, and gospel, here following."

Q. Is this permission to administer this holy sacrament to the sick agreeable to the practice of the primitive church?

A. Yes; for there is nothing more frequently mentioned by the ancient writers than the care of the church to distribute the eucharist to all dying persons who were capable of receiving it. It was esteemed indeed a very great unhappiness for any one to die before he had received this holy sacrament. But though this office is allowed for the spiritual comfort of the sick, yet it is rather for the sake of such as have been unable to attend at the public administration of the Lord's supper, than to be prostituted to those who in the time of their health have neglected the frequent exhortations to celebrate this holy ordinance, as their sincerity may be doubted, or their receiving ascribed to the fear of death.

Q. Why is timely notice to be given to the minister?

A. Because otherwise he might, through his necessary avocations, not be able to attend on this duty.

Q. Why is the sick person to signify to the minister how many there are to communicate with him?

A. That the minister may know whether there be a sufficient number, and also, how much bread and wine to consecrate.

II. *Of the Form of administering.*

Q. In what manner is this office to be performed

A. The minister is to begin with the collect, which is very proper to the occasion, and which is followed by two passages of scripture for an epistle

and gospel, which evidently tend to comfort and deliver the sick man from the fears he may be too apt to entertain. After which he is to proceed, according to the form before prescribed for the holy communion, beginning at these words, "Ye who do truly," &c.

Q. If the sick person shall be visited, and receive the holy communion at the same time, how much of the visitation-office is then to be omitted?

A. "The minister, for more expedition, is to cut off the form of visitation at the psalm, Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O Lord;" that is, when he comes to that psalm, he is not to use it, but to proceed to the communion.

Q. In what order is the minister to deliver the elements?

A. He is first to receive them himself; next to administer them to those who are appointed to communicate with the sick, and then to the sick person. The minister, we know, is always to receive the communion himself before he proceeds to deliver it to others.

Q. What instructions has the church given concerning those who have no opportunity of receiving the communion?

A. The following: "If a man, either by reason of extremity of sickness, or for want of warning in due time to the minister, or for lack of company to receive with him, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, the minister shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the cross for him, and shed his blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefor, he doth eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth." The mean whereby we partake of the benefits of this sacra-

ment, is a lively faith: and, therefore, as our church asserts in her articles, that "the wicked, and such as are void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth, as St. Augustin saith, the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ; but rather, to their condemnation do eat and drink the sign and sacrament of so great a thing." She, however, here declares, that if a sick man be hindered by any just impediment from receiving the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, yet by faith and repentance, he may eat and drink the body and blood of our Saviour Christ to his soul's health.

CHAPTER XV.

Of the Order for the Burial of the Dead.

ECCLESIASTES vii. 2.

It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: For that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to heart.

I. *Of Burials in general.*

Q. WHAT *becomes of us when death has separated the soul from the body?*

A. The soul returns to God who gave it, and the body to the earth from whence it was taken. Eccles. xii. 7.

Q. *How have funerals been performed?*

A. The manner of treating the bodies of the deceased has varied according to the custom of particular countries; though all civilized nations have agreed in performing funeral rites with due solemnity.

Q. What was the most ancient and natural method of disposing of the dead?

A. Depositing them in the earth was, undoubtedly, the most ancient and natural method. The Romans themselves used this custom originally; for Numa was buried, and all others till the time of Cornelius Sylla, who, having violated the sepulchre of Caius Marius, and being apprehensive the like would be done to himself, was the first patrician who ordered his body to be burnt after the Phrygian manner.

Q. How long did this custom continue among the Romans?

A. Until the empire became Christian; then the custom of inhumation or burying in the ground was restored.

Q. What people were most curious to embalm their dead?

A. The Egyptians; for they did it in the most costly manner, and with such exquisite art, that many of their bodies have been found entire, almost three thousand years after their death.

Q. Whence was it supposed this custom originated?

A. St. Austin thought that it arose from a belief of a resurrection.

Q. How has the care shown to dead bodies ever been esteemed?

A. Among all nations as an act of piety as well as humanity.

Q. What did the heathens call this care?

A. A divine institution, and reckoned it among the principal acts of religion and justice.

Q. How was it esteemed among the Jews?

A. As an eminent kind of mercy. 2 Sam. ii. 5.

Q. What is recorded of the primitive Christians?

A. That they were famous for their charity in burying the dead bodies, not only of their friends, but of their enemies.

Q. What have been thought sufficient grounds and

encouragements for the careful and decent sepulture of Christians?

A. The description of the persons who interred our Saviour, and the enumeration of the virtues, and the everlasting commendation of her who brake the box of precious ointment for his burial. This is the reason that, though they made no use of ointments while they lived, the most precious were not thought too costly to be used in their graves.

Q. Was this pious care of any service to the dead?

A. The reasons of this pious care did not proceed from any belief that the dead were benefitted by what was done to their bodies; for divers of the most eminent philosophers were regardless whether they were buried or not;* and several of the martyrs despised the threats of their persecutors, that they should want a grave.

Q. What then were the true reasons?

A. First, that the bodies of our friends may not be a prey to the birds and beasts, which no person, who hath any sense of humanity, could endure to behold. Secondly, that the shame of nature might not be exposed, since human modesty cannot endure such disgrace should be done to our own kind. Thirdly, that all may return to their proper place, and be covered in the bosom of their mother earth.

Q. But are not these reasons common to us with the Heathens?

A. Yes; but, besides these, Christians allege three more, viz. the consideration of our being made after the image of God, so that our bodies cannot be abused, but the dishonour will reflect on him after whose image we are made. Secondly, the consideration of what these bodies were when they were alive, viz. the temples of the Holy Ghost, and receptacles of rational and noble souls. Thirdly, the consideration of what they shall hereafter be, viz. that they shall live again, and be re-united to

* Plato in Phaedo. 182.

their souls; they shall be the subjects of God's omnipotence, who will awaken them at the last day, and raise them from their beds, where we decently lay them to rest.

Q. To whom is Christian burial denied?

A. First, to all adults who die unbaptized, and were never admitted into the Christian church. Secondly, to all who die excommunicated: the intent of which penalty is to bring the excommunicated to seek their absolution, and a reconciliation with the church for their soul's health, before they leave this world; for the church, by this mark of infamy, declares them cut off from the body of Christ, and distinguishes them from obedient and regular Christians. Lastly, the church has always denied Christian burial to those who are guilty of self-murder: both Jews and Gentiles suffered such to be unburied, to deter others from so horrid a crime: our church hereby declares she has little hopes of their salvation, who die in such an act of wickedness.

Q. What other circumstances of burial are there?

A. Three, viz, the place, the time, and the manner of funeral processions.

Q. Where did the Jews and Gentiles bury their dead?

A. Without the city; because the Jews, from whom the Gentiles received most of their customs, where prohibited by the law to touch or come near a dead body, and those who did so, were accounted unclean.

Q. And where did the Christians bury their dead?

A. The Christians, so long as the Jewish law was in force throughout the Roman empire, were obliged, in conformity to it, to bury their dead without the gates of the city; but when they were at liberty, they showed they did not act thus from any belief that the body of a deceased Christian defiled the place or persons near it; for they consecrated those places of burial, by erecting their churches upon that ground.

Q. What peculiar reason had they to erect their churches in the places of burial?

A. That as the faithful were going to the house of prayer, their minds might be prepared for it by the prospect of the graves and monuments of their friends; nothing being more apt to excite man to devout and affectionate prayer, than serious thoughts of death and the world to come.

Q. What did the council of Bracara decree concerning burials?

A. This council strictly prohibited the burying of any corpse within the walls of the church; and the great emperor Constantine himself, and many of his successors,* had their sepulchres in the porch of the great church at Constantinople, which was built and dedicated to the honour of the holy Apostles.

Q. How was the practice of burying the dead in churches introduced?

A. At first some eminent persons were allowed to be buried within the church, and afterwards, any who could pay for that honour enjoyed it. Burying in the church-yard was the most primitive practice.

Q. What is the next circumstance of burial?

A. The time; which our rubric does not particularize: but since death is compared to sleep, and as the grave is a resting place, the night hath been thought most proper for these solemnities; the silence and darkness of which contribute to the making them more serious; and, therefore, the evening has been the usual time of funerals in most countries, and the bearers have been called *Vespiliones* from that custom.

Q. What was the practice of the primitive Christians?

A. The primitive Christians were, indeed, by reason of persecutions, obliged to bury their dead

* Theodosius, in 395, and Arcadius, in 407, were interred in the same porch.

in the night; and afterwards, when they were freed from those fears, they retained that custom, only adding lighted torches, to show their hope of the parties being gone into everlasting light.

Q. What is the last circumstance of burials?

A. The manner of procession in funerals, which among Christians has always been for the priest to go before the corpse, singing hymns and psalms of joy, a practice still used in many churches; and in some places it is customary for the most considerable friends and acquaintance to bear the body; the chief mourners first, and then all the company following the corpse, to remind them that they must all shortly follow their deceased friend, in the same path of death.

Q. What was the primitive service used at burials?

A. A precise answer cannot be given to this question; we are sure, however, that the psalms were the principal scriptures used in it, as is evident from the concurrent testimonies of the primitive writers: and an ancient council orders, that the dead be brought to their graves with singing of psalms only; because the service of divine hymns at Christian funerals is sufficient to declare their hope of the resurrection. The psalms, therefore, were the principal part of this office; and the rest was chiefly taken from the other scriptures. And whoever considers the whole of our present burial office, must needs acknowledge it to be very excellent.

II. *Of the Sentences used in the Way.*

Q. Where is the minister directed to meet the corpse?

A. To allay the sorrow which naturally seizeth on us when we follow a dear friend to the grave, the minister is directed to meet the corpse at the entrance of the church-yard, to conduct the body of the deceased to the house of rest; the minister being hereby an emblem of the holy angels, who meet

the soul of the deceased, and conduct it to the kingdom of glory.

Q. In what manner does he come?

A. To comfort this mournful assembly, he comes with the gospel of peace, reading some select sentences of scripture, to persuade them to the three necessary graces to be exercised at a funeral, viz. faith, patience, and thankfulness.

Q. What sentence does he begin with?

A. He begins with John xi. 25, 26, being the words which Christ spake going towards Lazarus's grave, to comfort Martha for the loss of her brother; which were for that reason inserted into the funeral offices of all churches, to dissuade us from passionately bewailing our friend as one lost for ever.

Q. What is the next sentence?

A. The next sentence is Job xix. 25, 26, 27, used also in the offices both of the eastern and western churches, being a noble example of the exercise of that faith which was prescribed in the former verse.

Q. What is the third sentence?

A. 1 Tim. vi. 7, designed to make us patient, and not to grieve because our deceased friend has now left all his earthly comforts behind him; because, however destitute he seems now to be, yet he goes no otherwise out of the world than as he came into it.

Q. What is the fourth and last sentence?

A. This sentence goes yet higher, and exhorts us not only to patience, but thankfulness by the example of Job (Job i. 21), who, when he had sustained a much greater loss than a single friend, could still subdue his passion; and, instead of complaining, acknowledges God's blessing in lending him those comforts so long; saying, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

III. *Of the proper Anthem and Lesson.*

Q. Whence did the custom of following the corpse to the grave with psalms and hymns originate?

A. This custom originated, as St. Jerome tells us, from primitive tradition, and has since spread over the universal church. The present Greek church uses part of the 119th psalm, and the Latin church appoints the 117th, 115th, and several others, to be sung in this office; in compliance with which ancient and universal custom this anthem is here prescribed.

Q. Whence is this anthem taken?

A. Partly from the 39th psalm, and partly from the 40th; the first of which was David's funeral elegy upon Absolom's death, after Joab had so bitterly reproached him for his public grief; and is very suitable to those who are apt to be too much depressed with sorrow upon the loss of a friend. The other was composed by Moses in the wilderness, upon the death of that vast multitude, who, for their murmuring and infidelity, wasted away by little and little before they came into Canaan; and is a very proper and suitable subject for us, when we have a funeral before our eyes. The verses selected from the former of these psalms seem to be chosen by the church as particularly applicable to the relations and near friends of the deceased; whereas the verses selected from the latter, are proper for all who attend on those solemnities.

Q. What follows next?

A. After the anthem out of the Old Testament, follows the proper lesson out of the New; being the fullest account of the resurrection that the whole scripture affords; for which reason it was always accounted very suitable, and part of it was always used in funeral offices. That part of the chapter which our church uses is an exact and methodical discourse, proving the certainty of the resurrection, resolving the queries relating to it, and making a suitable application of the whole.

IV. *Of the Devotion and Solemnity used at the Grave.*

Q. What follows next?

A. The body, having been brought into the church to show that it died in communion thereof, is now carried to its repository the grave. And while the corpse is prepared to be put into it, our church has drawn up a most proper and pious meditation, for the sanctifying of our own souls, and the helping us to apply this example to our spiritual advantage.

Q. Why is this meditation directed to be used here?

A. Because, when the corpse is to be put into the ground, it is most likely to make the deepest impression on us, and to give us a lively sense of our mortality: which happy opportunity the church is unwilling to lose; and, therefore, while we are thus affected, presents us with a suitable form of devotion; it being first, a meditation on the shortness, misery, and uncertainty of human life;* secondly, an acknowledgment of our dependance upon God, and of our disobedience to him; thirdly, a prayer for deliverance from eternal death, and for support under that which is temporal.

Q. What follows next?

A. The solemn interring of the body; immediately before which, the Gentiles took their leave of the deceased friend by a certain form of words, bidding him "Farewell for ever." And the ancient Christians used to give a parting kiss of charity to

* The just reflections of Job on human weakness and mortality, agree perfectly with the melancholy object before our eyes; and the vehement aspirations for deliverance out of this assemblage of sins and miseries, which could only be finished by the dissolution of the body, are highly awakening. The same may be affirmed of the prayers which follow, and which are all expressed in a style the most pious and affecting that possibly can be.

the body, just as it was about to be put into the ground, to declare their affection, and to evidence that he died in the unity and peace of the church; a custom still observed in the Greek church, and in the northern part of England.

Q. What is the position of the corpse in the grave?

A. It has always been a custom among Christians, to lay corpses with their feet eastward, and their faces upward.

Q. How has the casting earth upon the body been esteemed?

A. As an act of piety by very heathens, insomuch that to leave a body unburied was deemed a great crime. The Christians had a peculiar order of men to do this office, called, in the east, Copiolæ; and in the west, Fossarii; though the priest always put in the first earth himself, as the Greek office still requires.

Q. What is to be observed concerning the form of words here used?

A. That it is very pertinent and significant: the phrase of *committing his body to the ground*, implies the delivering up a deposit for safe custody into such hands as will honestly render it up, and restore it again; and so reminds us that the bodies of Christians are not cast away as things of no value, but laid up safe in the earth, which is to restore all its dead back again at the resurrection. Rev. xx. 13.

Q. What follows next?

A. A consolatory sentence (Rev. xiv. 13), used by most churches in their office, being a special revelation from heaven made to St. John, and ordered to be by him recorded, for the consolation of the faithful in relation to the state of the dead. For since Jesus has now conquered death, "from henceforth blessed are the dead that die in the Lord;" they are not to be lamented, but rejoiced over; for God's Spirit assures us that they rest from their labours; their work is done; their warfare accom-

plished; and now they enjoy the crown of their victory, and the reward of all their pains.

Q. Why is the Lord's prayer used next to this sentence?

A. Because, though the deceased rest from their labours, we are in the midst of ours, and, therefore, we now proceed to pray for our own salvation, and the consummation of our own happiness; beginning, as in all other offices, with the Lord's prayer.

Q. What follows?

A. Next to the Lord's prayer follow two other prayers: the former of which seems to respect the whole company, as containing a profession of our faith concerning the happy state of holy men departed; a thanksgiving for the good examples of the servants of God, who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labours; and, lastly, a petition for the perfect consummation of ourselves, and all our pious friends who are gone before. The latter is peculiarly designed for the comfort of the relations and friends of the party deceased; in which there is such a mixture of acts of hope concerning our departed friends, and such a prospect of means to make us happy with them, as, being duly considered, will effectually pacify that unnecessary grief which is pernicious to us, but does the deceased no good; and will also excite us to a due care of our souls, in order to our meeting again our deceased friends with infinitely more joy than we now part with sorrow.

Q. How does this service end?

A. The whole office is concluded with a blessing, as we conclude all other offices of the church; which being indited by the Holy Spirit, will undoubtedly convey the grace of Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost; if we receive it as from the ambassador of heaven, and embrace it with a hearty Amen.

N. B. There are some persons who absent them-

selves from church for several Sundays, and sometimes for several months, upon the death of a near friend or relation; as if they meant to resent their loss, and openly affront the Almighty, in whose hands are the issues of life and death: whereas they ought then more especially to go to the house of God, and humbly acknowledge his hand in their affliction, and be thankful.

CHAPTER XVI.

Of the Thanksgiving of Women after Child-Birth, commonly called the Churching of Women.

1 SAMUEL ii. 6.

The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

PSALM cxvi. 18.

Therefore I will pay my vows unto the Lord, now in the presence of all his people.

I. *Of the Office in general.*

Q. WHEREIN *appear the reasonableness and propriety of this office?*

A. The birth of man is so truly wonderful, that it is a standing demonstration of the omnipotence of our Creator: and, therefore, that the frequency of it may not diminish our sense of gratitude, the church orders a solemn acknowledgment to be made on every such occasion by the party most concerned, that is, the woman, who still feels the effects of the curse laid upon our mother Eve (Gen. iii. 16), and endures sorrow for that first sin which gave beginning to our miseries; so that now she cannot give life to others without the extremest

hazard of her own; after which eminent deliverance, she is enjoined to come into the house of God, and offer up her praises in this short and excellent office.

Q. What is the original of it?

A. That law of Moses (Levit. xii.) which commands all women, after they have born a child, to come to the house of God within a certain number of days, with a sacrifice to praise God for this great mercy. And though nothing but sin makes any person unclean under the gospel, and so the ceremonial reason hath ceased; yet the obligation to make a public acknowledgment of so eminent a favour is a moral duty, and still obligatory. And, therefore, the blessed Virgin, who was not defiled by Christ's birth, observed this rite; and Christian mothers ever since have followed her example.

Q. At what time is it to be performed?

A. In the eastern church they bring their child in their arms, in imitation of the Virgin Mary, to present it to God; and they do this forty days after the birth, in allusion perhaps to the Jewish law, which accounted a woman unclean forty days, at least, if she bore a man child, and the number was double, if she bore a female. But with us there is no time prescribed by the church, only the mother is to come as soon as she shall be able, and the accustomed time is one month after delivery. Modesty, and generally necessity oblige them to stay so long; and if they be not recovered then, they must forbear longer, since they cannot praise God for a mercy before they have received it.

Q. Where should this office be performed?

A. In the church; and thence it is called the churching of women. The reasons of doing it so publicly are, because God's marvellous works in the formation of the child and preservation of the woman ought to be publicly owned, to teach others to put their trust in him; that thereby the whole congregation also may have a fit opportunity of praising

God, for the too much forgotten mercy of their several births; and that the woman to be churched may likewise, in the proper place, own the great mercy of being restored to the privilege of worshiping God in his own house, and with his own people. And, therefore, to do this in a private house, whether out of pride and state, or perverseness, is absurd, and contrary to the design of this office.

II. *Of the Devotions.*

Q. How does this office begin?

A. With a short and suitable preface, directed to the woman, whereby she is excited to a thankful acknowledgment of the mercy vouchsafed her; and then follows the hymn, taken out of the 116th psalm, composed by David upon his being restored from some great sickness; and is very applicable to the case of a woman who comes to give thanks for so great a deliverance.

Q. What is next?

A. The Lord's prayer, and some sentences which are designed as intercessions for the woman's safety and defence. "But the Lord's prayer may be omitted, if this office be used with the morning or evening prayer." See the rubric.

Q. How is this service concluded?

A. With a very suitable prayer, being an humble acknowledgment of the divine mercy and goodness in preserving the woman in the great pains and perils of child-birth; with a hearty desire of the continuance of God's help, that she may live and walk according to his will in this life, and in the life to come be partaker of his everlasting glory.

Q. What direction has the church given concerning the use of this office?

A. That this service, or the concluding prayer alone, as it stands among the occasional prayers and thanksgivings, may be used at the discretion of the minister.

CHAPTER XVII.

Of the Forms of Prayer to be used at Sea.

PSALM cvii. 23, 24.

They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.

Q. WHAT *is proper to be observed concerning the forms of prayer to be used at sea?*

A. That they are not designed for a complete office, nor comprised in any particular method; but are all of them, except the first two,* occasional forms, to be used as the circumstances of affairs may require; and are so adapted to their several occasions, that any one who observes them will readily see their suitableness and excellence, without any particular elucidation.†

* It seems by the rubric, that these two prayers are constantly to be used with the service, and that the other prayers, thanksgivings, &c. are to be introduced at the discretion of the chaplain, as occasion serves.

† "The short prayers for single persons who cannot meet to join in prayer with others by reason of the fight or storm," is a very wise order; as the duty of working the ship, or attending to a man's station in the time of action, is of more consequence than joining in the public prayers.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Of the Form of Prayer for the Visitation of Prisoners.

JEREMIAH x. 24.

O Lord, correct me, but with judgment: not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing.

Q. WHAT *is to be observed concerning the form of prayer for the visitation of prisoners?*

A. That the suitableness and propriety of the prayers and exhortations contained in it are so apparent of themselves, that they need no particular illustration.

CHAPTER XIX.

Of the Form of Prayer and Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the Fruits of the Earth, and all the other Blessings of his Merciful Providence.

PROVERBS iii. 9, 10.

Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

I. *Of this Form in general.*

Q. WHEN *is this form of prayer and thanksgiving to be used?*

A. "Yearly, on the first Thursday in November, or on such other day as shall be appointed by the civil authority."

Q. *Why has our church appointed a particular day for the performance of this duty?*

A. Because, in prosperity, we are apt not only to forget our great Benefactor, but our duty also to praise him for his goodness. And it is much to be lamented, that prosperity, though it affords an opportunity of the greatest thankfulness, yet frequently diverts us from it, and so becomes an occasion, as well of ingratitude, as of many other sins. "Then is God most of all," says Lactantius, "forgotten of men, when they enjoy the greatest number of his blessings, and so are obliged most of all to praise him for his beneficence; so that from plenty ariseth luxury, and from luxury proceed other vices, as well as ingratitude." But God forbid it should be so with us: I hope we are more sensible of his favours and our own obligations, than thus to requite the Lord with evil for good.

II. *Of the Sentences.*

Q. What is proper to be observed concerning the sentences?

A. That they are taken out of Deuteronomy and Proverbs, and are so admirably well chosen, that nothing farther is necessary to be added.

III. *Of the Hymn.*

Q. What is proper to be observed concerning the hymn?

A. That the hymn which is appointed instead of the *Venite Exultemus*, is so happily selected, that it seems, as it stands in this place, to be an entire psalm composed on purpose for this duty.

IV. *Of the Psalms.*

Q. What does the rubric direct concerning the use of the psalms?

A. That they shall be left to the discretion of the minister.

V. *Of the Lessons.*

Q. What lessons are appointed to be read?

A. The first lesson is Deut. viii. and the second 1 Thes. v. 12, to verse 24. The former of which is an exhortation to obedience in regard of God's dealings with us; showing that it is not enough to hear the word, except we practise it; and that to receive God's benefits, and not to be thankful, is to contemn God in them. And the latter contains divers excellent precepts for the government of ourselves in the performance of our duty.

VI. *Of the Epistle.*

Q. What is the design of the epistle?

A. To lead us to acknowledge God as the fountain and author of all goodness; to hearken to his word as the only rule of our faith and manners; to meditate upon it, and to act accordingly; for otherwise we may seem to be truly religious, but are not really so.

VII. *Of the Gospel.*

Q. What is the design of the gospel?

A. To teach us to be imitators of God, in doing good to all mankind;—particularly, to love our enemies, and to labour after perfection in the exercise of our charity, which must be universal, and not confined to persons of any particular description.

CHAPTER XX.

Of the Forms of Prayer to be used in Families.

JOSHUA xxiv. 15.

As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Q. WHAT *does the church require of every master and mistress of a family?*

A. That every morning and evening they shall call together as many of the family as can conveniently be present;* and that one of them, or any other person whom they may think proper, shall say, all kneeling, the form that is suitable to the hour.

Q. *Why ought every family to pay this daily homage?*

A. Because they are every day dependent on God; and every day, to express their gratitude, should begin and close with pious acknowledgments of this their dependence. Every morning, we should jointly look up to God for a renewal of his mercies; and every evening, ask forgiveness for the errors of the preceding day. When we rise, we should jointly implore his guidance; and before we lie down, we should unitedly supplicate his protection.

Q. *How are we encouraged to perform this duty?*

A. By the strongest assurances from the God of truth, that our prayers shall not ascend to heaven in vain; that if we ask, we shall have; if we seek, we shall find; and that if we knock, it shall be opened unto us.

* Monsieur De Renty, a late pious nobleman in France, used to assemble his family every evening to prayers, and discoursed to them every Saturday on the gospel for the next day.—May others imitate his example.

Q. What are the conditions necessary to render our prayers acceptable to God?

A. Attention, fervency, faith, humility, and submission to the will of God; confidence in his goodness, and integrity of heart.

Q. How does is appear to be a duty to worship God by family devotion?

A. From the dictates of reason, the authority of scripture, and the universal practice of all nations.

Q. How are these prayers introduced?

A. With the divine prayer of our Lord.

Q. Why ought we to use this prayer?

A. Because Christ has expressly commanded it; and also because it is the only prayer that we are sure is perfectly agreeable to the will of God, as having been dictated by Christ himself; by whom alone our prayers are made acceptable to our heavenly Father.

Q. What is the method and order of these forms?

A. In the morning, they begin with an acknowledgment of God's mercy and preservation, especially through the night past. Then we proceed to a dedication of soul and body to God's service, with a resolution to be growing daily in goodness. After this we unite in a prayer for grace to enable us to perform that resolution. And, lastly, we pray for grace to guide and keep us the following day, and for God's blessing on the business of the same.—In the evening, they begin with a confession of sins, and a prayer for contrition and pardon. Next is a prayer for grace to reform our lives. Then the intercession. After that the thanksgiving. And, lastly, a prayer for God's protection through the ensuing night.

Q. How are these prayers concluded?

A. With the benedictory prayer of St. Paul. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. In this blessing alone consists Christian happiness; and till it is possessed, the soul must feel an aching void. For, infinite in its desires, and immortal in its nature, the possession of

the earth, and all that is therein, can never satisfy it; nothing but Christ and his grace, God and his love, the Spirit and his consolations. This, and this alone, will effect such a blessing; for herein is the proper and true supply of all the wants of the soul. He that is partaker of this happiness, is able to deny all worldly lusts, and thirsts after no sinful enjoyments. In prosperity, this blessing heightens every comfort, and delivers him from the abuse of his abundance; in sickness and adversity, it is a source of patience and of peace; in retirement, it happily supplies the absence of friends and company. In short, this fellowship is light in darkness, joy in sorrow, and life in death.

A Meditation.

"Since all things demonstrate the being and government of a just and holy God, what a madness it is to live as though there were none! Nothing is more uncertain than human life; it is as a flower or vapour, and even as nothing. Our sins also add to this uncertainty; for God may make my bed this night in the grave, and thenceforth in hell. But who can dwell with everlasting burnings! Who can bear the knawing of the worm that never dies! I am resolved to live more christianly than I have done; I will retire and fall on my knees before God, and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants, for Jesus' sake." Amen.

CHAPTER XXI.

Of the Selections and Book of Psalms, in Prose.

1 CHRONICLES xxiii. 28, 30.

Their office was to wait—and stand—to thank and praise the Lord.

Q. WHY *are the Psalms denominated the Psalms of David?*

A. Not because they were all composed by him, but because the most of them were; the whole receiving their denomination from the greater part.

Q. Whence is this translation in the prayer book taken?

A. Out of the great English Bible, translated by William Tyndal and Miles Coverdale, and revised by Archbishop Cranmer.

Q. Why is this translation adopted by our church, rather than any other?

A. Because it is very plain and easy; for the Hebraisms being not so much retained as in other translations, the verses generally run much more musically, and fitter for devotion.

Q. How is the book of psalms appointed to be read?

A. The church has ordained that the psalter be read through once every month, as it is there divided both for morning and evening prayer. But in February it is to be read only to the twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth day of the month. And whereas January, March, May, July, August, October, and December, have each one-and-thirty days, it is ordered, that the same psalms shall be read the last day of the said months which were read the day before; so that the psalter may begin again the first day of the next month ensuing.

Q. What further directions has the church given concerning the use of the psalms?

A. That the minister, instead of reading the psalter as divided for daily morning and evening prayer, may take one of the selections of psalms set forth by the church. And on days of fasting and thanksgiving, appointed either by the civil or ecclesiastical authority, he may appoint such psalms as he shall think fit in his discretion, unless any shall have been appointed by the church in a service adapted to the occasion; which, in that case, shall be used, and no other. The minister may also use one of the selections, instead of any one of the portions of proper psalms on certain days, viz. Christmas, Ash-Wednesday, Good-Friday, Ascension-Day, and Whit-Sunday.

Q. Why are these divine compositions called psalms?

A. Because, though there are many complaints, and imprecations, and prayers in them, yet the greater part are praises to God: And even in all there are many acknowledgments of what God had formerly done for the author, of his confidence what he would still do, or of his resolutions how thankful he would be, when God granted him deliverance.

Q. By whom was the book of psalms collected into its present order?

A. St. Athanasius, following the Hebrew tradition, affirms, that Ezra put them together in one volume, as we now have them; which is not affirmed without reason; for we find that the foundation of the second temple was no sooner laid, than Ezra restored the ancient custom of psalmody, or singing of psalms of praise, which David had appointed to accompany the sacrifices as soon as the ark was settled, and which Solomon continued after he had built the temple, and brought the ark into it.

Q. Why do Christians use the Psalms of David in public worship?

A. From the instructions, examples and precepts, both of our Lord himself, and of his Apostles.

According to which the churches of Asia sung the divine songs of the prophets; while the Donatists,* a sect of vile and drunken heretics, sung the composures of human wit, as St. Austin informs us: "Nor can I see," says he, "what Christians can do more profitably and more holily than this, when they meet together, and are not reading, preaching, or praying."

Q. What was the ancient manner of singing psalms in Christian churches?

A. It was like that in Ezra's time, one beginning the hymn, and the rest answering the extremes, or last words of it, as the author of the apostolical institution tells us; which Eusebius calls the last part of the hymns, which he expressly says were sung by the whole company; who hearkened in silence to him that sung the rest, till he came to the close, which they all repeated together.

Q. By whom was the custom of singing the psalms alternately in Christian churches first introduced?

A. By Flavianus and Diodorus, who at Antioch divided the choir into two parts, singing alternately, one verse by one half of the choir, and the next by the other; whence the practice was spread, as it were, by a joint consent throughout the Christian world.

Q. How ancient is the custom of chanting among Christians?

A. It is very ancient. Socrates relates, that it was first taught to the church of Ephesus by St. Ignatius. It is most probable that it was an apostolical practice derived from the Jews, who used to chant the psalms in their synagogues. Certain it is, there was no age of the church wherein this custom did not prevail. The common tunes, which are at this day in use, are said to have been composed, or at least settled by Gregory the Great.

* This sect arose in the fourth century, and were the followers of Donatus, a Schismatic bishop of Carthage.

Q. When were musical instruments first used in singing of psalms?

A. The use of musical instruments appears to be no less ancient than the custom itself of singing psalms. The first psalm we read of was sung to a timbrel, viz. that which Moses and Miriam sung after the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. And afterwards at Jerusalem, when the temple was built, musical instruments were constantly used at their public service. Most of David's psalms, we see by their titles, were committed to masters of music to be set to various tunes; and in the 150th Psalm especially, the prophet calls on the people to prepare their different kinds of instruments wherewith to praise the Lord. And this has been the constant practice of the church, in most ages, as well since as before the coming of Christ.*

Q. When were organs, in particular, first used in Christian churches?

A. It is not certainly known; but we find it recorded, that about the year 660, Constantius Copronimus, emperor of Constantinople, sent a present of an organ to king Pepin of France; and it is evident that the use of them has been very common for several hundreds of years. Durand mentions them several times in his book, but gives no intimation of their novelty in divine service.

* In the Canton of Bern they use trumpets in singing of psalms.

CHAPTER XXII.

Of the Book of Psalms and Hymns in Metre.

EPHESIANS v. 19.

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.

Q. WHEN *are the psalms appointed to be sung?*

A. "Before and after sermon, at the discretion of the minister."

Q. *What has the church made the duty of the minister in the use of the psalms?*

A. "Either by standing directions, or, from time to time, to appoint the portion of psalms which are to be sung."

Q. *What further is required?*

A. "That with such assistance as he can obtain, from persons skilled in music, he give order concerning the tunes to be sung, at any time, in his church."

Q. *But what more especially does the church require?*

A. "That the minister suppress all light and unseemly music; and all indecency and irreverence in the performance, by which vain and ungodly persons profane the service of the sanctuary."

Q. *How ancient is the use of church music?*

A. As ancient as the church itself, as appears from the example of Christ and his Apostles.

Q. *What does Tertullian observe concerning it?*

A. That after the Agapæ, or love-feasts, it was usual to desire some one of the company to sing a canticle taken from the sacred writings, or some hymn of his own composing.

Q. *And what does St. Basil testify?*

A. That in his time, all the people, men, women, and children, sang in the churches; and that it was

a common thing for the people to sing psalms in their private houses and in the public places. And, in reality, every thinking Christian must be persuaded that it would be a much more Christian method of education, were our children taught to sing the psalms and hymns they hear in the church of God, instead of those idle, profane, and often obscene sonnets, which they too frequently learn, and which greatly tend to deprave and pollute their minds.

Q. What was church music originally?

A. Very simple and plain, and accompanied with very little inflexion of the voice.

Q. How was it afterwards improved?

A. St. Gregory the Great added more variety to it; and it was farther perfected by his successors, Stephen and Adrian. These last introduced the Gregorian or Roman music into most of the churches of the west. Since that time, like most other arts, it has been gradually improving.

Q. How was church music esteemed by the primitive fathers?

A. As very proper to raise the minds of the faithful to heavenly and divine things, and to excite in them such sentiments as God requires of us, when we join in the holy exercise of prayer. "How many tears have I shed," says St. Augustin, "when I heard hymns and canticles sung in thy church to thy praise, O my God! While the sound thereof struck my ears, thy truth entered my heart; it drew tears from my eyes, and made me find comfort in those very tears."

AN

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EXPLANATION

Of some Words and Terms used in the foregoing Exposition.

Absolution, a juridical act, whereby a priest pronounces the pardon of sins to such as seem to have the necessary qualifications. The word *absolution* is derived from the Latin word absolvo, which, in its primitive signification, is, *to loose*, *to untie*; the absolution, or remission of sins, being an act similar to that of loosing or untying a chain, or cord, with which any person or thing is tied or bound.

Abstinence, fasting, or forbearance of necessary food; being an act of humiliation, especially in times of eminent danger, plagues, wars, famine, &c.

Adoption, an act whereby any one receives another into his family; a very ancient custom, and formerly practised in almost all countries. By baptism we become the adopted children of God, John i. 12. and are made partakers, by promise, of the inheritance of the saints in light. Col. i. 12.

Adult, grown up, or past the age of infancy. The Jews and primitive Christians considered children as adults at the age of thirteen.

Affusion, the act of pouring water upon a person in baptism; and though dipping and affusion are two different acts, yet the word baptism implies them both.

Agape, a love-feast among the Christians of Corinth, which was at first instituted by the rich with a good intention, to supply the necessities of the poor and needy; but was afterwards prostituted to very evil purposes, gluttony and drunkenness; for which reason they were discontinued by ecclesiastical authority in the third century.

Alb, a surplice or white garment thrown over a

child at baptism, as emblematical of purity or innocency of life.

Allelujah, a Hebrew word, or rather two Hebrew words joined in one, used as a sign of joy and exultation, and is interpreted, *Praise ye the Lord.*

Alcoran, a book wherein Mahomet's laws and religion are written.

Altar, the table in Christian churches where the communion is administered.

Anabaptists, so called from the rebaptizing as many as come into their communion who were baptized in their infancy; for they are against Pedobaptism, or baptising of infants. Those who now call themselves baptists, are properly anabaptists.

Annals, a species of history, which relate events in the chronological order wherein they happened. They differ from perfect history in this, that annals are but a bare relation of what passes every year, as a journal is of what passes every day; whereas history relates not only the transactions themselves, but also the causes, motives, and springs of action.

Anthem, church-song, certain passages taken out of the scriptures, and adapted to a particular solemnity. They are performed in two parts, and should be written *Anthymn.*

Anti-pædo-baptist, one who rejects the baptism of infants, in opposition to the plain dictates of the holy scripture, and the unanimous practice of the primitive church for many ages after our blessed Saviour's ascension.

Antiphone, any verse or little sentence, which churchmen sing by course, one after another.

Apostle, a word derived from the Greek verb αποστελλειν, *to send on a message.*—Our Lord selected twelve out of the number of his disciples, whom he invested with the apostleship, most probably in allusion to the twelve patriarchs, and who are called the *Apostles* by way of eminence.

Apostolical Canons, rules or laws made for the government of the Christian church, supposed by

some to have been drawn up by the Apostles; others, as Bishop Beveridge, that though not written by the Apostles, yet they are very ancient, and properly a collection of the canons of several churches before that of Nice. Daillé takes them to be later, and not collected till about the end of the fifth century. To prove that they are not a work of the Apostles, Du Pin observes, that they contain many things that could never have been appointed by the Apostles; as the jurisdiction of Metropolitans, an order not established in their time; the canon against the Montanists and Novatians, and many other questions, which happened long after the Apostles.

Areopagite, a chief judge in capital matters in the city of Athens; so called of a certain street in that city dedicated to Mars, in which those judges were wont to sit. St. Dionysius, converted to the Christian faith by St. Paul, is supposed to have been one of those judges.

Arians, a sect of heretics who sprang up in the fifth century; and who denied the divinity of our blessed Saviour, and of the Holy Ghost. They were called Arians, from Arius their first founder. The name is derived from the Latin, and signifies *dry, without moisture.*

Attitude, the posture in which the body is placed in the time of public worship, and which ought always to correspond with the rubric. It is the duty of the congregation to stand, or sit, or kneel as the church directs; and to act otherwise is very unchristian, as well as indecent and unseemly.—The laity are as much bound to attend the various attitudes in divine worship as the clergy, and should no more presume to break the Apostolic rule, "Let all things be done decently and in order," than those who are the immediate ministers of the gospel.

Baptism, one of the sacraments of the New Testament, called by the Apostles and primitive writers *regeneration*, that is, a *new-birth*, whereby

people are initiated into the church of Christ, and answers to circumcision under the Old Testament. It may also be called our spiritual indenture to, or enlistment under, Christ; and is performed either by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion.

Baptistry, the place where the sacrament of baptism is administered.

Baptist, he that administers baptism, whether by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. The same is now generally assumed by those who hold to dipping only, as the people called Quakers exclusively arrogate to themselves the title of *friends*.

Bishops, the head order of the clergy, who alone have power to ordain the ministers of Christ, and to confirm the members of his church.

Calendar, a register of the year, in which the months and stated times are marked, as festivals and holy days.

Candidate, a person who is preparing himself for, and intends shortly to enter into holy orders. According to the canons of our church, deacon's orders are not to be conferred on any person before he is twenty-one years old.

Canon, from a Greek word, properly signifying a *rule*, or *line*, to make any thing straight, or to try the straightness of it. Therefore, laws or decrees made by ecclesiastical councils for church government, are called canons. And certain times of prayer used by churchmen were called *canonical hours of prayer*.

Capitulars, the body of the statutes of a chapter; the assembly of the clergy of a cathedral being so called.

Catechumen, one who is yet in the first rudiments of Christianity; or, one newly instructed in matters of faith.

Catholic, a Greek word, signifying universal, or general. Also one that is orthodox in opinion, that holds the general and right received faith. The Papists call themselves by this name; and we some-

times take the word catholic for a Papist, which is improper, since they are but a small part of the Christian church, when compared with other members of it.

Century, the space of one hundred years. We count the centuries in the Christian æra, from the supposed birth of our blessed Saviour.

Chalice, the cup which contains the wine at the holy communion, and which ought not to be applied to any common or ordinary use, but kept wholly for the service of the Lord's table.

Christian, any one who has been regularly baptized with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by some minister duly authorized for that purpose, and who has never been excommunicated; of which there are two sorts,—real and nominal.—The real Christian is one who adds faith and obedience to his baptism, and perseveres in this conduct till death; the nominal Christian is one who neglects his baptism, and lives a life of sin and wilful disobedience towards God.

Church, the whole body or society of regularly baptized persons, infants and adults, male and female, proselytes of every nation; bond and free, united under one and the same head, Jesus Christ, and governed by pastors of his own appointment.

Church of England, that part of the Christian church which is in England, as by law established; so denominated, to distinguish it, in its spiritual and temporal privileges, from other parts of the church universal.—The church of England professes the reformed religion in its choicest purity. In reforming their religion, the English were not so hurried by popular fury and faction as other nations were; but proceeded in a more prudent, regular and Christian method; resolving to separate no farther from the church of Rome than she had departed from the truth: so that the reformed church of England is the true mean between superstition

and fanaticism. Her doctrine is entirely built upon the Apostles and Prophets; her government is truly apostolical; her liturgy an extract from the best primitive forms; and her ceremonies few, and such as tend only to decency and true devotion.—In England there are nine thousand seven hundred and sixty-five Episcopal congregations, three thousand eight hundred and forty-five rectories, and about twenty thousand clergymen; generally men of as good reputation, and profound erudition, as can be produced by any one body or society of men in the world.

Church-Wardens, officers chosen yearly in every parish, to look to the church, church-yard, and affairs of the parish. The antiquity of this office, that is, when they first received that title, is very uncertain; though some are of opinion, that it was about the year of Christ 260. The wardens in regular churches are always superior to the vestrymen; these latter being only assistants to the former. —In South-Carolina they have reversed the order, and put the vestrymen before the wardens.—At the annual meeting of each vestry, in that state, they choose a chairman, and exclude the wardens from their proper seats.

Clinick, a sick or infirm person who keeps the bed. The word is borrowed from the Greek, and signifies *to lie along*.

Clerk, a layman who reads the responses to the congregation in the church, to direct the rest, and who is usually chosen or appointed by the rector.

Clergy, a body of men set apart by due ordination for the service of God; so called from a Greek word, which signifies a *lot* or *portion*, because the Lord is their portion; (Numb. xiii. 20.) and they are to be maintained out of those revenues which are given for the service of Christ and his church. These are of three degrees or orders: for in the preface "to the form and manner of making and consecrating bishops, priests, and deacons," our

church tells us, that "it is evident to all men diligently reading holy scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's church, bishops, priests, and deacons, which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation, that no man by his own private authority might presume to execute any of them, except he were first called, tried and examined, and known to have such qualities as were requisite for the same, and also by public prayer, with imposition of hands, approved and admitted thereunto."

Cœmetery, a burying-ground. The primitive Christians would never admit any unbaptized adults, or excommunicated persons, or self-murderers, to be buried in the church-yard; a rule which ought strictly to be observed, as a mark of infamy whereby Christians express their disapprobation of all such irregular characters.

Coemption, a buying together, a cermony in marriage among the Romans, whereby men and women seemed to make bargain and sale of themselves to one another.

Chrism, a Greek word, signifying an ointment, wherewith newly baptized children were anointed: sometimes it is taken for a white linen cloth, wrapped about an infant immediately after it is christened.

Christen, to baptize, to admit or initiate persons into the communion of the Christian church. Some ignorant people make a difference between christen and baptize; they apply the word christen to such as have been sprinkled or poured upon in baptism, and the word baptize to those only who have been dipped or immersed: but they signify the same thing; for baptism includes both sprinkling and dipping.

Collect, a short prayer suited to the subject or occasion; so called because the matter of it is collected from the epistle, gospel, and lessons for the day.

Common Prayer, so called because all have a common interest in the things prayed for, and join in the use of the same form prescribed by ecclesiastical authority, from which it is highly unreasonable that any clergyman of the same communion should presume to deviate.

Confession of Faith, a formulary, in which the articles of faith are comprised, and which is drawn from the holy scriptures.

Convention, with us, an assembly of clergy and laity; of which we have two kinds, general and state conventions.—The members of the general convention consist of bishops *ex officio*, and of clerical and lay delegates chosen by each state convention; and the members of the state convention consist of bishops (where there are any of that superior order) and presbyters, *ex officio*, and of lay delegates, chosen by the vestry of each respective congregation. In South-Carolina the clergy have no vote in the state convention, unless the lay-delegates of their respective parishes are present; nor even then, if they and their lay-delegates happen to disagree in opinion, as they vote together. In the other states, the clergy and laity vote in separate bodies, and the majority of both bodies is necessary to render their acts valid.

Covenant, a contract, stipulation, or agreement between two parties. In divinity, it is a particular dispensation whereby God deals with mankind; as the covenant of works under the Old Testament, and the covenant of grace under the New.

Conversion, a change from one state to another; or, a turning from evil to good. Conversion is of two kinds, instantaneous and progressive; the former of which is seldom to be met with, and is generally to be doubted in most of those who pretend to tell the day, the hour, and the minute when it took place.

Convert, a person who changes from one opinion to another. Properly, such as are turned from Hea-

thenism and infidelity to the Christian faith, are converts.

Councils, meetings or assemblies of the bishops, or governors of the church, to rectify abuses in faith or discipline, to enact laws or canons for the government of the church, and to regulate all matters relating to the state of religion. Of these ecclesiastical assemblies, some are provincial, others national, and others oecumenical or general. Provincial councils are those in which the bishops of one province only meet; national, those in which the bishops of one nation are assembled; and oecumenical or general, those in which the bishops from all parts of the Christian world are convened. There is a dispute between the Papists and Protestants about the number of general councils; the former reckon eighteen or more, and the latter but six or seven.—The reader will not be displeased if I enumerate them.—The first general council of Nice, A. D. 325.—The first general council of Constantinople, A. D. 381.—The general council of Ephesus, A. D. 431. The number of bishops at this council was almost 200.—The general council of Chalcedon, A. D. 451. The number of bishops was about 600.—The second general council of Constantinople, A. D. 553.—The third general council of Constantinople, A. D. 680.—The second general council of Nice, A. D. 787.—The fifth general council of Constantinople, A. D. 869.—The first general Lateran council, A. D. 1123.—The second general Lateran council, A. D. 1139.—The third general Lateran council, A. D. 1179.—The fourth general Lateran council, A. D. 1213.—The first general council of Lyons, A. D. 1245.—The second general council of Lyons, A. D. 1274.—The general council of Vienna, A. D. 1311.—The general council of Constance, A. D. 1414.—The general council of Basil, A. D. 1431.—The general council of Trent, A. D. 1545.

Creed, a summary of articles of faith, expressing

concisely and comprehensively the doctrines of Christianity held to be essentially necessary to everlasting salvation. The term is derived from the Latin word *credo*, in English *I believe*. The most celebrated creeds of antiquity are the following, viz. The creed commonly called the Apostles' creed, composed in or near the times of the Apostles. The creed found in Irenæus, who was the disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of John. The three creeds in Tertullian, who flourished in the second century, and was nearly contemporary with Irenæus. The ancient creed of the Church of Jerusalem, from St. Cyril. The creed attributed to Origen. The creed of Gregory Thaumaturgus, bishop of Neocæsaria, in Pontus. The creed of Lucian, who suffered martyrdom towards the close of the third century. The Nicene creed, strictly so called, and Constantinopolitan, commonly called the Nicene. The creed of Pelagius, composed before he fell into the erroneous opinion he entertained concerning original sin. And, lastly, the Athanasian creed.

Deacons, the lowest order of the clergy, having power to preach, to baptize, and to solemnize the banns of matrimony: they are also wont to administer the cup to the communicants, but never allowed to consecrate the elements at the Lord's supper.

Eastern Church, that part of the Christian church which chiefly prevails in the eastern parts of the continent of Europe, and in Asia; and is, according to the pattern of the primitive church, Episcopal.

Ejaculation, a short fervent prayer, whereby the soul does, as it were, dart itself towards heaven in an instant.

Episcopacy, the government of the church by bishops, as distinct from, and superior to, presbyters, according to the institution of Christ and his Apostles; and which, by the promise of the Saviour, is to continue to the end of the world.

Episcopalians, an appellation given to those who

prefer the Episcopal discipline of the church to all other modes of church discipline; as in reason they may well do, since that was the peculiar mode of discipline which was established by Christ and his Apostles in the Christian church.

Excommunication, a punishment inflicted by the church, or a sentence, pronounced by an ecclesiastical judge, against offenders, debarring them from the participation of the sacraments.

Evangelist, one who brings good tidings; for which reason St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, are called Evangelists, because they first, in writing, published the joyful history of our redemption by the Son of God.

Eucharist, properly signifies a giving of thanks; but, in ecclesiastical writing, it is often taken for the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of Christ.

Extempore prayer, such prayer as is performed without any previous reflection; or it is such as is uttered without premeditation.—All prayer performed without book is considered by the generality of the laity as extempore, but to a critical observer it is found to be otherwise; and what is commonly called the instantaneous effusion of the spirit, is nothing more or less than a set form previously conceived; in the performance of which, after a few times experience, we can even go before the speaker as he is discharging his office.—No extemporary prayers, that we read of, were ever used in the Christian church for above fifteen hundred years after Christ was upon earth; and no Christian church, for that period of time, that I can discover, ever omitted the use of the Lord's prayer in their public addresses to God.

Fasts, days of public humiliation and prayer. The fasts of the ancients were either yearly, as that of Lent, which they observed daily till six in the evening; or weekly, as those of Wednesday and Friday, which they observed till three in the afternoon.

Feast of Tabernacles, a feast kept by the Jews for seven days together, during which they continued abroad in tents, in remembrance that their fathers lived for a long time in tents after their departure from Egypt.

Festival, a day or season of thanksgiving, or feasting, wisely appointed by the Christian church, to express our love and gratitude to God, for the various instances of his mercy to us and to all mankind.

Greek Euchologian, a formulary, or book of prayers used in the Greek church.

Greek Church, so called from the country, namely, *Greece*, where it was first planted, and from the language in which their public liturgy is performed. The Greek church chiefly prevails in the following countries of Europe, namely, Greece, Macedon, Epirus, Bulgaria, Thrace, Servia, Russia, Moldavia, Walachia, Bossica, Podolia, and Moscovia, and the islands also of the Ægean sea, and in some parts of Poland, Dalmatia, and Croatia; and likewise in the following countries of Asia, namely, in Natolia, Circania, Mengrelia, and Russia.—Note, Russia, or Moscovia, comprehends great part of the continent of Europe and Asia; it is therefore mentioned under each of them.

Habendum and Tenendum, Latin words, which signify *to have and to hold.*

Helenists, Jews born out of Judea, and who use the translation of the Septuagint in their synagogues, having many of them little or no knowledge of the pure Hebrew.

Heretic, one who is guilty of heresy, that perversely makes his own choice what points of religion he will believe, and what he will not believe. The ancient Christians would not eat with heretics.

Holy-day, the day of some ecclesiastical festival, especially appropriated to the service of God. The observation of holy-days, however some persons may despise them, has been recommended to

us by the precepts and practice of the Christian church in all the best and purest ages.

Immersion, the act of plunging into, or under water, in baptism; a mode which, though not essential to the administration of this ordinance, is, nevertheless, very commendable and proper.

Incarnation, used commonly to signify the great mystery of the Son of God assuming our flesh, or human nature, by the miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost, being born of the substance of the Virgin Mary, for the redemption of the world.

Intercession, a most earnest and solemn entreaty with God in behalf of others, for such things as we conceive they stand in need of.

Invocation, a calling upon God in prayer, either for averting present evils, or bestowing the good things we want.

Invocation of Saints, a form of calling upon saints for their assistance and intercession with God in our behalf; an error justly exploded by us, since the scripture declares that there is but one mediator, Christ Jesus, between God and man.

Laity, the people in general, distinguished from the clergy.

Latin Church, so called from the service of that church, which is performed in Latin.

Lay Baptism, that baptism which is administered by laymen; which, however men may plead necessity in excuse of it, is not authorized by the Christian church.

Liturgy, a form of public or common prayer. Of all prayers the ancients had the greatest esteem for public, as well knowing the more persons joined together to beg of God any mercy, the more force their prayers had to obtain it. And the service being ended, they saluted each other, the men the men, and the women the women, with the kiss of peace, that is, of love and unity.

Lutheran Church, so called, because it holds the doctrines of the reformation as taught by Martin

Luther, the first reformer of religion in the sixteenth century.

Lessons of the Church, certain portions of holy scripture, appointed to be read in the church, at the time of divine service, for the instruction of the people. In the ancient church, the lessons were always two at least, and sometimes three or four; and their method of reading them seems always to have been governed by certain rules, though this might vary in different churches. Our own church, in the appointment of lessons, observes two different courses, one for ordinary days, and another for holy-days. On ordinary days she begins the course of her first lessons with the book of Genesis, in the beginning of her civil year, and proceeds regularly through the greatest part of the Bible. Isaiah alone is not read in the order in which it stands. This evangelical prophet, in conformity to primitive usage, our church reserves to be read in the season of Advent. And though the most part of the Bible is read through every year once, yet it must be observed, that some chapters of particular books, and three whole books, are left unread and unnoticed; which I shall now proceed to point out, as also the reasons why they are omitted. Genesis, chapters 10, 36, and 38, are not read, because they contain little else than genealogies, or other matters less profitable to the hearers. Of Exodus we read the first twenty-four chapters. From the 25th to the end of that book we find little that does not relate to the ark, and other local and temporary particulars; and, therefore, we omit them all, except chapters 32, 33, 34 and 40, which are accordingly read. Leviticus treats chiefly of Jewish sacrifices and ceremonial observances, of clean and unclean beasts and birds, of lepers, &c. Of this book we therefore read only four chapters, namely, the 19th, 24th, 25th, and 26th. What was observed of Leviticus in general is applicable to many of the chapters of the book of Numbers, which

are therefore omitted. All Deuteronomy is read, except chap. 23, which is omitted for the same reason that we omit the 18th, and 20th of Leviticus; and the other parts of that book record little more than Jewish observances. The history contained in Joshua, from chap. 11 to 21 inclusive, is not read. It treats of the destruction of the petty kings, the passage of the Israelites into Canaan, and the division of the land among them. Both the books of Chronicles are entirely excluded, probably because they principally consist of a detail of facts, which are in general more fully related in the books of Samuel and Kings. Chap. 2d of Ezra is a mere catalogue of names, and, therefore, properly omitted. Chap. 10th is not read. Of Nehemiah, chapters 3, 7, 11, 12, which consist only of the names of those who built the wall, "registers of genealogies," &c. having no tendency to Christian edification, are not read. Chap. 10th of Esther was probably thought too short, and the matter not sufficiently important for a lesson. Of Proverbs, chap. 30th is the only one not read in the church. In it there occur a few verses which render the reading of the whole less proper, though one could have wished that Agur's confession and prayer had been retained. The Song of Solomon is totally omitted, because this most beautiful but mysterious composition exhibits a spiritual meaning, which many in a mixed congregation cannot be supposed to be capable of understanding. Ezekiel is divided into forty-eight chapters, of which only nine are read; because a considerable degree of it consists of visions, the sense of many of which is confessedly obscure even to the learned; and besides, some chapters of this prophecy contain passages improper to be read in the public service. The style and language of Ezekiel does likewise occasionally make this book less eligible for public reading than those of the other prophets. Excepting the omission of the greater part of Ezekiel,

the whole of the prophetical books of the Old Testament are read through once a year.—On Sundays, and all the other days appointed to be kept holy, the regulations of the church, respecting the first lessons, vary, as was observed before, from the course pursued on ordinary days. For the Sundays in Advent, after Christmas, and after the Epiphany, proper first lessons are selected from Isaiah, who, on account of the clearness with which he has spoken of the Messiah, and of the gospel dispensation, is usually styled *the evangelical prophet.* Upon Septuagesima and the two following Sundays, and throughout the whole season of Lent, such chapters from the prophets are read as probably were thought best adapted to this penitential season, and to lead us to that repentance which is not to be repented of. On Easter-day proper lessons are selected out of Exodus; in which, under the figure of the deliverance of Israel from its bondage in Egypt, and by the institution of the Passover, is represented our redemption from sin and death, by the sacrifice *of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world.* From Easter to Whitsunday the lessons are chosen from the prophets, and are admirably adapted to the days and season to which they are annexed. On Whitsunday the first lesson for morning is selected from Deuteronomy, and contains the institution of the *feast of Weeks*, which was the second great festival among the Jews: it was called the feast of Penticost, from its beginning seven weeks after the Passover, and was the very day that the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles, it being just fifty days after Easter. The first lesson for evening is taken from Isaiah, and represnts the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, under the gentle influences of his spirit. From Trinity Sunday to Advent, the church proceeds through the books of the Old Testament nearly in the order in which they stand, selecting such chapters as were thought most interesting and instructive. For

holy-days, our venerable compilers have generally appointed proper first lessons out of the books that may be called *moral*, such as Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, &c. The second lesson at morning and evening prayer is uniformly taken out of the New Testament. The lessons of the New Testament are in general very proper. In the choice of them, the church adopts the same method that she pursues on ordinary days, four excepted, namely, the Sunday before Easter, Easter-day, Whitsunday, and Trinity Sunday, for which proper lessons are appointed. The church also appoints proper second lessons for most of the holy-days. But these lessons, which relate the circumstances, or apply the example, which gave occasion to the festival, are not numerous; and they seldom interrupt, except for the day, the orderly course of reading the New Testament. In the morning we read the gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, and in the evening the Epistles. We begin the year with the first of Matthew, and the first of Romans, so that exclusive of the epistles and gospels in the communion service, the New Testament is read over ordinarily three times a year in our daily common prayer.

Martyrology, a catalogue, or list, of martyrs, including the history of their lives and sufferings for the sake of religion. The martyrologies are very numerous.

Martyrs, those Christians who laid down their lives for the gospel, sealed their faith with their blood, or suffered death for the sake of their religion. The word is of Greek original, and is as much as to say *witnesses;* and is therefore very properly used to denote those who *suffer for righteousness sake*, inasmuch as thereby they bear the strongest testimony to the religion they profess.

Misna, or *Mishna*, the code or collection of the civil law of the Jews. The word signifies *repetition*, and is as much as to say, *a second law;* whence the Greeks call it *Deuterosis* (Δευτερωσις) a word of

the same signification with Misna or Mishna. The Misna was received with profound veneration by all the Jews, as containing what was dictated by God himself from mount Sinai, together with the written law.

Missal, the Romish mass-book, containing the office or prayers used at the celebration of the eucharist.

Metre, verses running in rhyme, and made by measure.

Nuptial-day, the day of marriage.

Occasional Prayers, short forms, to be added to the more general supplications and intercessions made in our litany and daily prayers, on special occasions, at the discretion of the minister, or at particular request.

Occasional Thanksgivings, short forms to be added to the *general thanksgiving*, when the petitions which we may have offered up in any of our occasional prayers have been granted, and our desires fulfilled; when either a calamity has been removed, or a blessing vouchsafed.

Ordinary, an established judge of ecclesiastical causes: thus a bishop is the ordinary of each diocese, to whom every minister, when he repels any person from the holy communion, is obliged to give an account of the same.

Ordination, the act of investing any man with sacerdotal powers, which is the exclusive right of a bishop. Women, according to St. Paul, have no right to holy orders, nor to speak in the church, as public teachers; for, says the Apostle, "It is a shame for women to speak in the church." And again, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

Orthodox Christian, one who holds to a true and right faith, or religion.

Pædo-baptism, the same as infant baptism.

Pædo-baptist, one who holds to the baptism of infants, which is agreeable to the will of Christ re-

vealed in scripture, and the practice of the Apostles, as well as conformable to the practice of all orthodox Christians ever since.

Paranymph, with the ancients, the person who waited on the bridegroom, and directed the nuptial solemnities; with us, he is called the brideman. As the paranymph officiated on the part of the bridegroom, a woman, called the *Pronuba*, officiated on the part of the bride; with us, she is called the bridemaid.

Polygamy, a plurality of wives, or the having more wives than one at the same time, which is contrary to the original institution of God, as appears from our Saviour's declaration.

Precomposed Forms of Prayer, such forms of prayer as are wisely and deliberately drawn up, by men eminent for piety and understanding, previously to their being used in public worship; of which, the beaten oil in the temple was a lively representation, and no doubt intended of God to teach us, as well as the Jews, that we should not presume to offer him our religious service without mature deliberation.

Primitive Christians, the first and most ancient members of the church of Christ; such as lived in the days of the Apostles, and in the ages next succeeding their time.

Protestant, one who adheres to those who, at the beginning of the Reformation, protested against the errors of the church of Rome.

Psalter, the book of Psalms; so called, from its title in the Latin service.

Persecutions, the torments and sufferings which Christians underwent during the reigns of several of the Roman emperors.

Rector, the chief minister of a particular church or congregation.

Response, the answer made by the people to the minister in the performance of divine service.

Rite, a solemn act, or observance of religion.

Ritual, a book in which the rites and observances of religion are set down.

Rubric, directions in prayer books; so termed, because they were originally distinguished by being printed in red.

Ritualists, persons skilled in the ritual.

Sacrament, a mystical ceremony, instituted by our Saviour, being "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace;" of which there are two in the Christian church, namely, baptism, and the supper of the Lord; which is also called the eucharist, or holy communion.

Sacramentary of St. Gregory, a book containing a collection of prayers and devotions suited to the holy communion; so called, because it was compiled by St. Gregory the Great.

Sexton, an officer in the church who digs graves; so called, by corruption, from the word *sacristan*, which signifies one who has the care of *sacred things*. He is usually chosen by the minister.

Surplice, a white linen garment worn by the Christian clergy in the celebration of divine offices. This habit seems to have been originally copied from the vestments of the Jewish priests, who, by God's own appointment, were to put on a white linen ephod at the time of public service. And its antiquity in the Christian church may be collected from Gregory Nazianzen, who advised the priests to purity, because "a little spot is soon seen in a white garment;" but more expressly from St. Jerome, who, reproving the needless scruples of such as opposed the use of it, says, "what offence can it be to God for a bishop or priest to proceed to the communion in a white garment?" The ancients called this garment, from its colour, *Alba*, the Albe.—The surplice is white, to represent the innocence and righteousness with which God's ministers ought to be cloathed. As for the shape of it, it is a thing so perfectly indifferent, that no reason need be assigned for it; though Durandus has found

out one: for that author observes, that as the garments used by the Jewish priesthood were girt tight about them, to signify the bondage of the law, so the looseness of the surplice used by Christian priests signifies the freedom of the gospel.—It is objected by non-episcopalians, against the use of the surplice, that it is a *rag of Popery*, and has been abused by the papists to superstitious and idolatrous uses. But this is no just objection against it; for if the surplice, or some such white garment, was in use among the the primitive Christians, the church is justified in following their example, notwithstanding the abuses thereof by those of the Romish, or any other communion.

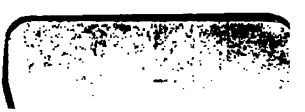
Talmud, a book in great veneration among the Jews, in seven folio volumes, containing their doctrines and morality, and especially the Rabinical traditions, constitutions, and explications of the law.

Versicle, a little verse, or short sentence, spoken partly by the minister and partly by the people, intended to quicken the attention, and prevent weariness in the performance of public worship.

Version, a translation from one language to another.

Vespiliones, the common bearers at a funeral in the primitive church; so called, because burials were attended in the evening.

Wafer, the consecrated bread given at the sacrament of the Lord's supper among the papists, made of wheat flour reduced to a thin paste.

Worship, the offering up of adoration, prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and confession to God, as our Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge. Religious worship is considered as divided into public and private devotions.

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